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VOLUME THIRTEEN

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The MINISTER'S ANNUAL

VOLUME THIRTEEN

Material contributed especially for this Volume, and arranged for the Calendar year.

COMPILED AND EDITED
By
JOSEPH McCRAY RAMSEY
Editor of
The Expositor & Homiletic Review.

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JOSEPH McCRAY RAMSEY

ADDENDA

SERMONS FOR SPECIAL OCCASIONS
(See Index.)
A collection of thought-provoking sermons for the various special days of the year.

TALKS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE
(See Index.)
Suggestive for addresses to juniors, suitable for various Sundays of the year.

ILLUSTRATIONS are included in all sermons, and a casual examination of the volume will give one hundred of pointed illustrations in their natural setting as a part of the sermon.

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS, based on the International Series of Texts (*copyrighted by the International Council of Religious Education and used by permission*), are found in each chapter for the year.

SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY
AT CLAREMONT
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THE MINISTER'S ANNUAL, VOLUME THIRTEEN

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THE MINISTER'S ANNUAL

VOLUME THIRTEEN

A VOLUME OF ESPECIALLY WRITTEN SERMONS, A SERIES OF SERMONS ON CHURCH YEAR TEXTS, MID-WEEK MEDITATIONS, SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS BASED ON THE INTERNATIONAL LESSON TEXTS, SUGGESTIONS FOR SERVICES, INCLUDING PSALMS, HYMNS, OFFERTORY SENTENCES, OFFERTORY PRAYERS, AND ANTHEMS FOR CHOIR AND ORGAN. THIS VOLUME IS DESIGNED FOR THE USE OF PASTORS, EVANGELISTS, MISSIONARIES, RELIGIOUS EDUCATORS, AND SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS.

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SERMONS FOR SPECIAL OCCASIONS
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ADDITIONAL FEATURES

MID-WEEK OUTLINES
William Tait Paterson, D.D.

SERMONS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE (See Index)

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS
Harold Francis Branch, D.D.

ORDER OF SERVICE

PRAYERS
ANTHEMS
HYMNS
YOUNG PEOPLE'S TOPICS
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Joseph McCray Ramsey, Editor of *The Expositor & Homiletic Review*, Editor of THE MINISTER'S ANNUAL for 1929, 1930, 1931, 1932, 1933, 1934, 1935, 1936, 1937, 1938, 1939, 1940, 1941.

PROLOGUE

IT'S a noisy tin roof, outside my work-shop window, upon which a hollow, "drip drip, drip, drip," tells me that the sparkling, sun-splashed row of icicles is slowly backing up, these warm days, to leave where it has been hanging, room for whatever of beauty or blemish a coming day shall provide.

"We," starts the letter, "have decided to join that ever-widening circle of folks who have discontinued the custom of sending out Christmas greeting cards. This year we find it a bit difficult to say, 'Merry Christmas,' 'Joy to the world,' 'Peace on earth.'"

One does not have to listen long, nor hard, nor be near a resounding tin roof, to hear the distinct "drip, drip, drip, drip," of that self-same and ever-widening circle, slowly melting under the combined suns of Mars, Indifference, Pre-occupation, Avidity, whatnot. No one is more aware of that than you who eye this page, this moment. Of all, this ever-widening circle of question and doubt is most vicious.

To join that circle is to cease firing in the heat of battle; to abandon ship when the seas roll high; to leave Dunkirk to save herself; to stand near Peter when the cock crows; to barter also for His garments and not hear, "It is finished"; to weep at the foot of the *cross* and withhold exultant "hosannas" before the empty tomb.

The circle *is* widening, but it contains within its swing not a one who can still hear those reassuring words, "My peace I leave with you," "Not as the world gives, give I." He whose faith is so fragile as to fracture under the impact of world-wide godlessness and brutality, has never known real peace, that which passes human understanding.

And maybe no little responsibility for that fact affixes itself to the pulpit of the Christian Church. The Bibleless pulpits of the decade, the concern for filling pews instead of souls, the wide concern centered upon "all these things," at the expense of righteousness, church management rather than soul management! Our vision has been so often crossed. Being near-sighted we have failed widely of the distant vision.

There can be no responsibility which is yours, of greater moment for this day, than that originally given "Go.—Make disciples." One would think we had forgotten the assurance, "lo, I am with you alway," or, if remembering, give it small credence.

The fifth century cathedral may be a Hitlerized shambles but not the faith it sheltered and nurtured through long ages. Or don't you believe that? Homes, like stalks of grass before the reaper, may be mown down under the keen blade of man's passion, but the altars within remain standing. Does legislating God from out of the bounds of a nation banish also His truth? That is more fixed and certain than Polaris. The gates of hell shall not, cannot prevail! With such ammunition for our guns, in a day whose cry for peace is more terrifying than a demon's shrieking bomb, how can we be content within our own souls if we preach not the Gospel? How can we muster to our pulpits triviality, irrelevance, when we possess the one remedy for the world's ailment? Our responsibility is to reach this ever-widening circle and bring back to their reason those who have been driven by hopeless anxiety, to flee to it in panic.

No reiteration of the Angels' chorus of Peace and good will? To what shallow, superficial depths of exuberant assurance that it is with the righteous well, have we pricked with our sermons? Can it be true, as is so frequently claimed, that we have wandered from the one Way of Salvation? Is it time that we return from our vain wanderings in a far country to the definite, "Thus saith the Lord?"

If that is your conviction as it is mine, then within the pages to follow you will find countless sign posts pointing the way, leaving neither you, nor any traveller, uncertainty as to the one available, route out of the valley of desolation into which we have ventured, for as never before the one requirement above all others, placed upon the manuscripts which comprise this issue of The Annual has been, "Does it point the way we must go?"

Every year brings an increase in letters from every section of the country, expressing the hope that the "enclosed sermon" may be acceptable for the forthcoming Annual. There is no dearth of material available. There is no necessity for us to turn to ancient volumes and magazines as sources of material for this book. As in former years the material has been submitted for use in this specific issue, for this specific purpose, that it, with the others, might help to re-emphasize the need of the hour and turn us all to a serious reconsideration of the Gospel of our fathers in our sermonic utterances.

Is it all new material? No newer than the Gospel of Peace on Earth and good will among men. After all we err when we demand originality at the expense of other more vital matters. Still, there is no better aid to originality, if originality one must have, than a knowledge of what others are doing in any given field. Creativeness is so truly rare as to be either epoch-making or just a mere oddity. Original thought hesitates to drop from the blue upon the mind eager to receive. It is stimulated by others and what others have done and never more so than when such stimuli is something another has said or written. The greatest writers are most frequently the greatest readers. They are frankly interested in the kind of seed used by another, his method of cultivating the soil, and the harvest he reaps.

You who are deliberately alert in your ceaseless search for provocative ideas sermonic, do well to give a larger portion of your reading time to media in the sermonic field. Unless your search is so centered and specific it tends to flare out fan-wise into an expanding, ever-expanding indefinitude. Maybe that has been back of much of the ineffectual preaching the generation has known. Seeking "anything" usable in sermons we have overlooked the eternal need for seeking one specific "something" without which a sermon becomes a lecture which turns the hungrying soul away empty and unsatisfied.

You who are familiar with the camera are only too well aware of the hazy, indistinct, out of focus picture. Would that the same attempt to secure sharp, hair-line focus, common among camera users, might be common also in the pulpit. We have had an era of sermonic utterance which, instead of bringing into sharp, clean-cut focus the image on the cross, has hazed and blurred that figure until it stands as the center of an astigmatic uncertainty in which no one does or can have faith, for in it there is nothing clear enough to warrant or invite faith.

How much of the woe and grief of the hour is due to that fact would be hard to prove. It is probably considerable. Yet to whatever extent it may be true, it is to to that extent to which incontrovertible responsibility rests upon the pulpits of the Christian Church. There can be no other answer than that of preaching Christ and Him crucified, for nothing else can empty human hearts of hate and strife save the story of Love. The pulpit voice raised upon any other theme trifles with an hour of unspeakable crisis.

One thing more. During the early issues of the Annual, each volume was designated by the year of its appearance. Naturally, each issue came to be thought of as peculiarly, if not entirely, set up for one specific year, in the sense of the calendar and hence the 1929 Annual for example, was no more usable in 1930 than the 1929 calendar. Of course, countless thousands of you know differently. You have discovered a timelessness about the volume which might have but has not been stressed by its producers. Were subsequent issues to appear in March or in July or in September, each, regardless of its date of issue, would cover fifty two weeks so that its serviceability is always available.

As has been true in former years, so have the contents of this volume been submitted by your brother ministers, with no hope of greater reward than the extended, worldwide broadcast of their own interpretation and development of the message of salvation, which to them as well as to us, constitutes the one needful balm of Gilead. Their continuing generosity and high words of joy in "being permitted" again to contribute to the pages of this book, humble us and urge us on. May your words of gratitude, you who seek and find the word of help and cheer and inspiration and hope with which these pages are freighted, with ours, be not withheld from the contributors to this book. They are the ones who make your Annual possible.

J. M. R.

CONTENTS

PAGE

Advent.....498, 500, 509, 519, 525, 532, 538, 557
Anarchy.....115, 311, 392, 398, 404, 439, 505, 570
Anthems (See Each Chapter)
Anxiety.....63, 115, 164, 197, 212, 225, 242, 276, 351, 360, 368, 429, 449, 546
Appreciation.....377, 484, 490
Arbour Day.....228, 323, 343, 432
Armistice Day.....102, 256, 317, 360, 398, 458, 517
Ascension.....163, 248, 260, 263
Ash Wednesday.....34, 108
Atonement.....63, 150, 153, 158, 175, 177, 421, 454
Attendance.....49, 50, 60, 108
Baccalaureate.....56, 70, 78, 81, 164, 221, 252, 278, 487
Benedictions (See Each Chapter)
Bible.....100, 134, 267, 333, 458
Brotherhood.....90, 115, 133, 141, 166, 168, 227, 319, 338, 392, 396
Character Building.....60, 70, 78, 81, 112, 123, 130, 135, 221, 228, 232, 252, 278, 310, 439, 482, 505
Children's Day.....238, 287
Christmas.....509, 527, 532, 535, 538
Church.....80, 116, 134, 138, 168, 181, 215, 227, 267, 273, 287, 296, 314, 333, 367, 381, 384, 426
Citizenship.....27, 164, 303, 370, 402, 449, 471, 482
Commandments..... 422
Commencement.....56, 70, 78, 81, 164, 228, 252, 278, 487
Communion.....105, 144, 260, 273
Compassion.....63, 150, 153, 175, 177, 497
Consecration.....54, 73, 100, 116, 147
Conversion.....38, 46, 63, 80, 108, 116, 127, 158, 203, 251, 281, 356, 371, 412, 526
Courage.....34, 43, 56, 88, 164, 180, 203, 231, 242, 352, 386, 505
Cross, The.....126, 150, 153, 160, 175, 177, 199, 216
Death.....115, 186, 189, 207, 216
Democracy.....27, 92, 256, 299, 300, 317, 360, 398, 426
Doubt.....88, 212
Easter.....186, 189, 192, 197, 205
Enthusiasm.....49, 255
Epiphany.....23, 34, 550, 554, 558
Evangelism....54, 73, 100, 116, 147, 158, 281, 284, 295, 392, 412, 417, 471, 512
Faith.....21, 30, 38, 42, 64, 68, 90, 120, 154, 181, 289, 293, 341, 352, 360, 404, 408, 462, 466, 495
Father's Day.....70, 77, 81, 83, 88, 90, 102, 112, 116, 130, 133, 141, 145, 164, 166, 168, 231, 232, 303, 319, 347, 410, 439

PAGE

Fear.....88, 92, 207, 212, 225, 351, 449
Forgiveness.....21, 97, 118, 245, 414
Fortitude.....34, 43, 56, 64, 88, 164, 180, 203, 231, 242
Fourth of July.....27, 92, 256, 299, 300, 317
Funeral Sermons.....186, 189, 192, 197, 205, 263
Giving.....87, 157,.390
Golden Rule.....102, 137, 297, 392
Good Friday.....126, 150, 153, 175, 177, 216, 570
Grace.....30, 31, 156, 267, 289, 376
Habits.....77, 123, 130, 216, 238, 241, 315, 331, 442, 482
Happiness.....115, 231
Harvest.....87, 156, 484
Heroism.....34, 43, 56, 88, 164
Holy Spirit.....54, 203, 263, 267, 270, 285, 336, 348, 431
Holy Week.....126, 160, 199, 525, 570
Home.....70, 77, 112, 135, 168, 209, 215, 235, 238, 241, 381, 402, 424, 439, 449, 500
Honesty.....123, 130, 133, 166
Hope.....21, 34, 56, 64, 119, 553
Hymns (See Each Chapter)
Immortality.....186, 189, 192, 197, 205, 207, 216, 263
Incarnation.....498, 500, 509, 519, 528, 532
Jesus Christ.....123, 136, 160, 163, 175, 177, 184, 199, 225, 266, 289, 293, 356, 396, 493, 495, 517, 519, 525
Labour.....81, 102, 145, 166, 215, 231
Law.....137
Leadership.....373
Liberty.....115, 256, 398
Lincoln.....43
Lord's Supper.....105, 144, 260
Love....115, 184, 209, 225, 235, 254, 273, 352, 358, 381, 421, 500, 570
Loyalties.....88, 92, 352, 354, 377, 384
Marriage.....77, 134, 209, 215, 221, 235, 241, 379, 402
Martyrdom.....126
Memorial Day.....102, 251, 317
Men.....70, 77, 81, 83, 88, 90, 102, 112, 116, 130, 133, 141, 145, 164, 166, 168, 231, 232, 238, 256, 303, 319, 347, 356, 379, 390, 396, 411, 417, 439, 457, 482, 487, 505
Mercy.....120, 150, 225
Ministry.....168, 273, 323, 559, 567
Miracles.....141
Missions.....263, 284, 295, 307, 322, 326, 412, 417, 471
Mother's Day.....70, 235, 238, 241
Nature.....228, 308, 343, 432, 511
Neighbours.....77, 83, 88, 108, 112, 133, 141, 168, 238, 319, 424
New Year.....21, 123, 550, 554, 558

PAGE

Offertory Prayer (See Each Chapter)
Offertory Sentence (See Each Chapter)
Old Age....467, 479, 484
Opening of Schools....363, 377, 387, 390, 435, 455, 474, 504, 550
Ordination....168, 273, 323, 559, 567
Palm Sunday....172, 180
Passion....115
Peace....102, 231, 338
Pentecost (Whitsunday)....54, 138, 203, 263, 267, 270, 336, 348, 431
Personality....37, 196
Pessimism....368, 373
Prayer....31, 98, 112, 235, 289, 447, 489, 501, 563
Prohibition....77, 238, 331, 442
Prophecy....23
Rally Day....352, 356, 363, 371, 377, 379, 384, 387, 426, 435, 455, 458, 474, 504
Reformation....436, 443
Repentance....23, 118, 148, 414, 454, 466, 469
Responsibility....98, 232
Resurrection....163, 186, 189, 192, 197, 205
Revival....46, 50, 73, 80, 451, 455
Righteousness....251, 328
Rural Life....209, 228, 308, 343, 432
Salvation....63, 108, 115, 120, 163, 267
Sanctification....38, 46, 63, 80, 108, 116, 127, 245, 263, 278, 386
Sickness....207
Sin....115, 127, 133, 147, 148, 199, 208, 245, 399, 414, 454, 469
Social Order....80, 83, 88, 102, 108, 115, 130, 141, 166, 215, 256, 299, 347, 392, 439, 517
Spirituality....63, 83, 158, 196, 203, 371
Stewardship....87, 156, 296, 328, 390, 523
Suffering....27, 115, 216, 219, 242, 351, 360, 546
Temperance....77, 238, 331, 442
Temptation....147, 216, 360
Thanksgiving....87, 97, 484, 489, 490, 523
Transfiguration....163, 248
Trinity....281
Trust....88, 92, 120, 154
Victory....83, 87, 95, 172, 180, 186, 231, 255, 256, 263, 267, 278, 300, 303, 386, 457
War....27, 108, 115, 256, 439, 449, 458, 505, 517, 570
Washington....27, 164, 303, 370, 402, 449, 471, 482
Whitsunday....54, 138, 203, 263, 267, 270, 336, 348, 431
Worry....88, 92, 216, 276, 360, 429, 449, 546
Young People....50, 56, 81, 83, 95, 98, 112, 116, 123, 145, 164, 212, 221, 228, 232, 242, 252, 278, 299, 311, 363, 387, 435, 474, 487, 504, 505

SERMONS

PAGE

Absalom, *Hanger* 98
After Night The Morning, *Jordan* 64
Amendment Of Life, *Kirts* 23
Appreciation, Sense Of, *Siegart* 377
Autumn Leaves, *Hunter* 432

Balanced Life, *Viele* 550
Barriers To God, *Gouwens* 404
Beauty Of Ashes, *Siegart* 34
Bedouin Christians, *McCullough* 296
Behind Strange Doors, *Wyle* 328
Bethlehem Conversations, *Nabers* 539
Bible And War, *Arms* 458
Birth At Bethlehem, *Rogers* 528
Bread Of Life, *Carlson* 105
Builders For Tomorrow, *Valentine* 70

Center, Immovable, *Phillips* 408
Centrality Of God, *Cole* 278
Charter Of Church, *Kerr* 267
Christ, Getting Back, *Young* 519
Christ's Challenge, *Staver* 517
Church Of Christ, *Rees* 138
Church, The, *Magary* 381
Church, Triple Need Of, *Johnson* 384
Commandment, Keystone, *Sockman* 422
Companionship, Transforming, *Crockett* 319
Comparisons, *Morton* 411
Confidence For Coming Days, *Staver* 21
Creative Convictions, *McKeehan* 130
Cross, Forsaken Man, *Nygaard* 177
Cross Of Christ, *Carlson* 199
Cross, The Necessary, *Fisher* 150
Crosses, The Three, *Fagerburg* 175
Crosses, Unexpected, *Banning* 216
Crucifixion, Paradox Of, *Benson* 160
Cup, This, *Harkey* 260

Daily Rate, *Krutzky* 338
Day, The Uncertain, *Staver* 92
Dead, Four-Fifths, *Walton* 363
Deacon's Duty, *Nabers* 567
Dead Shall Live, *Nabers* 189
Defence And Confidence, *Krutzky* 141
Democracy Needs Religion, *Morton* 27
Dissensions Among Leaders, *Nabers* 373
Door, The Open, *Macartney* 116

PAGE

Doubts, *Mills* 212

Easter, What Difference, *Benson* 197
Eclipse By Cloud, *Hanger* 248

Facing Life, *Luther* 123
Faith, A Workable, *Magee* 360
Faith, Cementing Power, *Magary* 495
Faith In Present Hour, *Blackwelder* 42
Father's World, *Wyand* 570
Flood, After The, *Smith* 467
Fulness Of Time, *Siegart* 532

Garden And Sepulchre, *Hayden* 186
Generation, One To Another, *Yates* 505
Glory To God, *Vaughn* 563
God, An Ear For, *Gouwens* 289
God, How Can We Know, *Banning* 281
God In Nature, *Palmer* 323
God, Man's Capacity For, *McCullough* 417
God, Three Ways To Know, *Nabers* 356
God's Place In Life, *Durkee* 168
God's Purpose, *Staver* 154
God's Thoughts, *Kerr* 245
Gold, Frankincense, Myrrh, *Carlson* 535
Gospel In A Headline, *Kirts* 270
Gospel, Soul Of, *Carlson* 471
Gratitude, *Nabers* 484
Guiding Stars, *Crockett* 78

Habitual Christianity, *Wilson* 60
Heaven, Fire From, *McKeehan* 348
Hidden Riches, *McCullough* 134
High Road To Life, *Barlow* 252
Hills, Understanding With, *Weist* 343
How Old Are You, *Durkee* 242
Human Automobility, *Carlson* 387

Infants Crying, *Staver* 449

Jeremiah, The Prophet, *Macartney* 37
Jesus, Habits Of, *Fagerburg* 315
Jesus Had Not Come, *Krutzky* 429
Jesus, Life Of, *Kerr* 392
Jesus Misunderstood, *Blaesi* 525
Jesus, You Need Universality Of, *Lacey* 396
Jewels, The Three, *Harkness* 112

Kingdom, The, *Braunstein* 181
Knowledge, Misuse Of, *Viele* 399

PAGE

Liberty, The Price Of, *Nygaard* 256
Life, Extremes Of, *Braunstein* 145
Life, Great Hours In, *Hunter* 164
Life, The Strong, *Gouwens* 56
Life, Tree Of, *Leinbach* 228
Life, Ultimate Values, *Burnham* 487
Light From Above, *Gosselink* 73
Live, Do You Care To, *Wyle* 46
Live, What Does It Mean, *Walton* 371
Living Anew, *Huget* 300
Love's Last Call, *Harkey* 273

Majority, Irresistible, *Bowden* 554
Man, A Good, *Nabers* 439
Man, Dependence Of, *Viele* 120
Marred Vessels, *Carlson* 221
Ministry, This, *Reed* 559
Mother, A Godly, *Bowden* 238
Mother's Petition, *Mattice* 235

Old Age, Why Fear, *Jordan* 479
Olympic Games, *Massee* 50

Pain, Path Of, *Gouwens* 546
Peace, The Path To, *Kerr* 102
Pessimism, Rebuke To, *Johnson* 368
Prayer Habit, *Bowden* 501
Prayer, Need Of, *Rees* 31
Protestantism, *Mattice* 443

Question Answered, *Leedy* 158

Ready For Coming, *Hunter* 263
Reformation, *Schroeder* 436
Religion Of Spirit, *Viele* 285
Revival, Cost Of, *Nabers* 451
Risen, Christ Is, *Banning* 205
Risen, Jesus Has, *Nabers* 193
Roll Call, *Kerr* 232

Sacredness Of Life, *Harkey* 225
Sea, Symbolism Of, *Lacey* 308
Second Place, *Walker* 311
Should Such A Man, *Magary* 88
Singing At Midnight, *Staver* 352
Sins, Forgiveness Of, *Kerr* 414
Sin's Midnight, *Macartney* 148
Song Of Security, *Nabers* 209
Stars In Dark World, *Hatch* 95

PAGE

Tell Us Plainly, *Hanger* 293
Thanksgiving, *Kirts* 490
Thy Will Be Done, *Hanger* 108
Time Like This, A, *Staver* 426
Torch, Holding Up, *Mattice* 455
Triumphant Entry, *Nabers* 172
Two-Talent Men, *Wilson* 83

Voice Of Church, *Rothenburger* 333

Water Of Life, *Macartney* 512
Waters Of Babylon, *Holmes* 127
Way Of New Life, *Nygaard* 303
Word Becomes Flesh, *Morton* 509
World, We Make Our, *Virgin* 81
World, What Is Coming, *Phillips* 498

Yesterday, Today, *Kerr* 462
Youth Will Be Served, *Walker* 474

POETRY

PAGE

Light Of World 76
New Vistas, *Clark* 94
Hound Of Heaven, *Thompson* .. 108
Master Mind, *Browning* 111
Invictus, *Henley* 111
Let Us Pray, *Wesley* 111
Rivers Of Babylon 128
O Men Of God 140
Vision, *Tennyson* 159
Son Of Man 179
Out Are The Lights, *Poe* 190
Blow Golden Trumpets 196
Alas For Him 199
When You're A Child, *Vito* 211
He Leadeth Me 212
God Knew The Best 219
Are You Able 238
In Memoriam, *Tennyson* 243
Grow Old With Me, *Browning* .. 245
To Every Man, *Oxenham.* 254, 441
All This We Have, *Kipling* 257
O Cross . . ., *Matheson* 261
They Passed Him By, *Kennedy* 274
Desire Of All Nations, *Markham* 276
Be Still My Soul 279

PAGE

Grant Us The Will, *Drinkwater* 304
I Walk In Crowded Streets, *Kennedy* 304
The Mystic Dreaming 309
After Sunset, *Conkling* 324
Today 339
The World, *Wordsworth* 365
To Live 373
Failure, *Leitch* 427
I Shall Not Live In Vain, *Dickinson* 428
Rise Ye Children, *Falckner* 439
He Died For His Faith 441
I Thank Thee, *Coates* 493
The Inn, *Wells* 529
I Heard The Bells, *Longfellow* 531, 532
The Lord My Shepherd 540
Pray At Jerusalem 543
My Little Bird, *Bunyan* 549
Heaven, *Browning* 553
At The Portal 557
My Father's World 571
Flanders Field, *Kilmer* 572

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS

International Series for 1941 *by Special Permission of the International Council of Religious Education*

By The Rev. Harold Francis Branch, D. D.

			PAGE
Jan.	5:	Jesus And Human Affliction, Luke 13:1-5, 10-17	26
	12:	Personality, Luke 14:1-14	36
	19:	Invitation, Luke 14:15-35	49
	26:	Christ's Concern For The Lost, Luke 15:1-10	63
Feb.	2:	Beverage Alcohol, Habakkuk 2:15	77
	9:	Attitude Towards Possessions, Luke 16:10-15	87
	16:	Forgiveness And Gratitude, Luke 17:1-4	97
	23:	Call To Prayer, Luke 18:1-14	112
Mar.	2:	Authority Of Christ, Luke 19:1—20:8	123
	9:	Christ Rejected, Luke 20:9—21:38	133
	16:	Lord's Supper, Luke 22:1-38	144
	23:	Jesus Condemned, Luke 22:39—23:56	153
	30:	Christ's Commission, Luke 24:36-53	163
Apr.	6:	Christ Promises Power, Luke 24:48-49: Acts 1	180
		Triumphant Entry, Luke 19:28-40	180
	13:	Christ Alive, Luke 24:1-43	192
	20:	Witnessing Power, Acts 2:1—4:31	203
	27:	Meeting Human Needs, Acts 4:32—7:60	215
May	4:	Church Fellowship, Acts 8	227
	11:	Beverage Alcohol, Deut. 6:4-7; Jer. 35:5-10	238
	18:	Saul's Conversion, Acts 9:1-31	251
	25:	Peter's Vision, Acts 10:1—11:18	263
June	1:	Antioch Movement, Acts 11:19-30	273
	8:	World Missions, Acts 12:25—13:12	284
	15:	World Missions, Acts 13:13—14:28	295
	22:	World Missions, Acts 15:1-35	307
	29:	The Early Church, I Cor. 3:1-15	314
July	6:	Gospel Taken To Europe, Acts 15:36—18:21	322
	13:	Christianity In Asia, Acts 19:1—21:17	326
	20:	Beverage Alcohol, I Cor. 5:9-13; Titus 2:1-8	331
	27:	Holy Spirit In N. T. Letters, Gal. 1:11; I Thess. 2:13	336
Aug.	3:	Paul Preaches Christ, Rom. 3:21-31	341
	10:	James Teaches Christian Living, James 1:17-22	347
	17:	Peter Encourages Christians, I Pet. 4:12-19	351
	24:	Writer Explains New Covenant, Hebr. 8:1—10:18	354
	31:	John Urges Love, I John, 3:13-18	358

PAGE

Sept. 7: Message To Persecuted Churches, Rev. 1—3 367
14: God, The Source Of Help, Rev. 7:9-17 376
21: Overcoming Adversary, Rev. 12:1—15:4 386
28: Fulfilment Of History, Rev. 21-22 398

Oct. 5: God Our Heavenly Father, Gen. 1:26-28 410
12: Christ Our Saviour, Matt. 1:21 421
19: Holy Spirit Our Helper, Gen. 1:2 431
26: Beverage Alcohol, Deut. 5:32-33 442

Nov. 2: Sin And Consequences, Gen. 3:1-24 454
9: Repentance And Faith, Isa. 1:10-20 466
16: Union With Christ, John 14:20 478
23: Prayer And Thanksgiving, Psalm 103 and 107 489
30: Christian Love, Lev. 19:17-34 500

Dec. 7: Work Of Church, Matt. 16:13-20 511
14: Christian Stewardsip, Matt. 25:14-30 523
21: Coming Of God's Son, Isa. 9:6-7 538
28: Christian Hope, Matt. 25:31-46 553

MID-WEEK SERMON OUTLINES

THE REV. WILLIAM TAIT PATERSON, D. D.

PAGE

Believing In God 29
Jesus Christ, Place We Give 40
Active Spirit of God 54
God's Care 68
Establishing Kingdom 80
Fellowship of Faith 90
Revealing Word 100
Human Nature 115
Calvary, Meaning of 126
God Our Father 136
Last Enemy 147
Stewards of Grace 156
Like Unto A Businessman 166
God Loves You 184
Light In Darkness 196
How Often Do We Die 207
Jesus' Cross: Why Not Others .. 219
Duty Of Joy 231
Conquering Ideal 241
Man's Spirit God's Lamp 254
Reputation Of God 266
Inexhaustible God 276

PAGE

Church And The Child 287
Jesus And Modern Youth 299
Estimate Of Ourselves 310
This Land Of Ours 317
Stand Up And Be Counted 370
Getting Things Done 379
The Roadmender 390
Three Homes 402
World For Christ 412
Lives Interlaced 424
Playing The Game 435
Our Church And Prayers 447
Extinct Volcanoes 457
Change Your Mind 469
The Thorough Man 482
Multiplication Of Jesus 493
Do We Ever Get Away With It 504
Need Of Patience 515
God Stops A Man 526
How To Find God 545
Wondrous Birth 557
Jesus Faced Future 558

CHURCH YEAR SERMONS

PAGE

Epiphany, Jan. 6 23
Real Amendment, Matt. 3:2
Sunday after Epiphany, Jan. 12 34
Beauty for Ashes, Isa. 61:3
Epiphany Two, Jan. 19 46
Live, Care To, John 3:3
Epiphany Three, Jan. 26 60
Habitual Christianity, Matt. 25:33
Epiphany Four, Feb. 2 73
Light from Above, John 8:12
Epiphany Five (Septuagesima), Feb. 9 83
Two-Talent Men, Matt. 25:22
Epiphany Six (Sexagesima), Feb. 16 95
Stars in Dark World, Phil. 2:15
Epiphany Seven (Quinquagesima), Feb. 23 105
Bread of Life, John 6:35
Ash Wednesday, Feb. 26 108
Thy Will Be Done, Matt. 6:10
Lent One (Invocavit), Mar. 2 120
Dependence of Man, Jer. 10:23
Lent Two (Reminiscere), Mar. 9 130
Creative Convictions, Mark 9:23
Lent Three (Oculi), Mar. 16 141
Defence and Confidence, Acts 14:20
Lent Four (Laetare), Mar. 23 150
Necessary Cross, Heb. 9:11-15
Lent Five (Judica), Mar. 30 160
Crucifixion, 8:46-59
Palm Sunday, Apr. 6 172
Triumphant Entry, Matt. 21:10
Good Friday, Apr. 11 .....175, 177
Three Crosses, Luke 23:33
Man on Cross, Matt. 27:46
Easter Sunday, Apr. 13 ....186, 189, 193
Garden and Sepulchre, John 19:41
Awake and Sing, Isa. 26:19
Jesus Risen, Matt. 28:6
Easter One (Quasimodogeniti), Apr. 20 199
Cross of Christ, Gal 6:14
Easter Two (Misericordias), Apr. 27.. 212
Doubts, John 11:1-16; 20:24-29
Easter Three (Jubilate), May 4 225
Sacredness of Life, Job 2:4
Easter Four (Cantate), May 11 235
A Mother's Petition, Matt. 20:20
Easter Five (Rogate), May 18 245
As God Thinks, Isa. 55:8
Ascension Day, May 22 248
Eclipsed by Cloud, Acts 1:9
Ascension One, May 25 260
This Cup, Matt. 26:27
Whitsunday (Pentecost), June 1 270
Gospel Headline, John 3:16
Trinity Sunday, June 8 281
How Know God, Isa. 6:1
Trinity One, June 15 293
Tell Us Plainly, John 10:21

PAGE

Trinity Two, June 22 303
New Life, John 3:7
Trinity Three, June 29 311
Second Place, Matt. 5:5
Trinity Four, July 6 319
Companionship, Acts 4:13
Trinity Five, July 13 323
God in Nature, Job 12:8
Trinity Six, July 20 328
Behind Doors, Matt. 5:20
Trinity Seven, July 27 333
Voice of Church, Matt. 11:28
Trinity Eight, Aug. 3 338
Daily Rate, II Kings 25:30
Trinity Nine, Aug. 10 343
With the Hills, Psa. 95:3-4
Trinity Ten, Aug. 17 348
Fire from Heaven, Luke 12:49
Trinity Eleven, Aug. 24 352
Singing at Midnight, Acts 16:25
Trinity Twelve, Aug. 31 356
Know God, Psalm 19:1-14
Trinity Thirteen, Sept. 7 363
Four-Fifths Dead, Luke 10:30
Trinity Fourteen, Sept. 14 373
Dissensions, Matt. 20:24
Trinity Fifteen, Sept. 21 384
Need of Church, Acts 4:13
Trinity Sixteen, Sept. 28 396
Universal Jesus, John 12:20
Trinity Seventeen, Oct. 5 408
Immovable Center, Eph. 3:20-21
Trinity Eighteen, Oct. 12 417
Man's Capacity for God, Gen. 2:7
Trinity Nineteen, Oct. 19 429
Jesus Had Not Come, John 6:17
Trinity Twenty, Oct. 26 439
A Good Man, Psa. 1:3
Trinity Twenty-one, Nov. 2 451
Revival, Eph. 6:12
Trinity Twenty-two, Nov. 9 462
Yesterday, Today, Heb. 13:8
Trinity Twenty-three, Nov. 16 474
Youth Served, I Tim. 4:12-13
Trinity Twenty-four, Nov. 23 487
Ultimate Values, James 4:13-15
Advent Sunday, Nov. 30 498
What Is Coming, Luke 1:78
Advent Two, Dec. 7 509
Word Becomes Flesh, John 1:14
Advent Three, Dec. 14 519
Christ in Christianity, John 12:46
Advent Four, Dec. 21 532
Fulness of Time, Gal. 4:4
Christmas, Dec. 25 535
Gold, Frankincense, Matt. 2:11
Sunday after Christmas 550
Balanced Life, Luke 4:16

YOUNG PEOPLE

	PAGE
Builders For Tomorrow, *Valentine*	70
Centrality Of God, *Cole*	278
Do We Ever Get Away With It, *Paterson*	504
Doubts—Harmful and Wholesome, *Mills*	212
Extremes of Life, *Braunstein*	145
Facing Life, *Luther*	123
Four-Fifths Dead, *Walton*	363
Great Hours In Life, *Hunter*	164
Guiding Stars, *Crockett*	78
High Road To Life, *Barlow*	252
How Old Are You, *Durkee*	242
Human Automobility, *Carlson*	387
Marred Vessels, *Carlson*	221
Modern Youth, *Paterson*	299
Olympic Games, *Massee*	50
One Generation To Another, *Yates*	505
Playing The Game Through, *Paterson*	435
Roll Call of Generations, *Kerr*	232
Second Place, *Walker*	311
Stars In A Dark World, *Hatch*	95
Strong Life, *Gouwens*	56
The Open Door, *Macartney*	116
The Three Jewels, *Harkness*	112
The Tree Of Life, *Leinbach*	228
The Young Man, Absalom, *Hanger*	98
Two-Talent Men, *Wilson*	83
Ultimate Values In Life, *Burnham*	487
We Make Our World, *Virgin*	81
Youth Will Be Served, *Walker*	474

SCRIPTURE INDEX

Code: (S) Sermons; (MS) Mid-Week Sermons; (SS) Sunday School Lessons

	PAGE
Gen. 1:2 (SS)	431
Gen. 1:26-28 (SS)	410
Gen. 3:1-24 (SS)	454
Gen. 4:9-12 (SS)	77
Gen. 4:16 (S)	148
Gen. 9:28 (S)	467
Ex. 3:14 (MS)	276
Ex. 15:25 (S)	228
Ex. 34:47 (SS)	410
Lev. 19:17-34 (SS)	500
Lev. 27:8ff (S)	377
Num. 10:29-31 (S)	333
Deut. 5:32 (SS)	442
Deut. 6:4-5 (SS)	500
Deut. 6:4-7 (SS)	238
Deut. 6:23 (S)	154
Deut. 7:7-8 (MS)	184
Deut. 8:3 (S)	371
Deut. 32:39 (S)	145
Deut. 33:27 (MS)	68
Joshua 1:1-11-3:1-6 (S)	92
Ruth 1:16 (S)	123
I Sam. 1:27-28 (S)	238
II Sam. 18:32 (S)	98
I Kings 20:18 (S)	368
II Kings 6:16 (S)	554
II Kings 25:30 (S)	338
I Chron. 29:10-22 (S)	484
II Chron. 7:15 (MS)	447
II Chron. 26:4 (S)	232
Neh. 6:10-11 (S)	88
Neh. 8:10 (MS)	231
Esther 4:14 (S)	164
Job 2:4 (S)	225
Job 12:8 (S)	323
Job 33:4 (MS)	310
Psalm 1:3 (S)	439
Psalm 19:1-14 (S)	356
Psalm 23:1-6 (S)	209
Psalm 24:2 (S)	570
Psalm 27:1 (S)	56
Psalm 33:12 (S)	27
Psalm 46:10 (S)	112
Psalm 55:17 (S)	501
Psalm 71:9 (S)	479
Psalm 85:8 (S)	289

PAGE

Psalm 95:3-4 (S) 343
Psalm 103:10 (MS) 504
Psalms 103-107 (SS) 489
Psalm 107:4 (S) 296
Psalm 119:71 (S) 546
Psalm 137:4 (S) 127
Psalm 137:5 (MS) 317

Prov. 1:8 (MS) 241
Prov. 14:34 (SS) 442
Prov. 20:27 (MS) 254
Prov. 22:6 (SS) 238

Isa. 1:10-20 (SS) 466
Isa. 2:12 (S) 64
Isa. 6:1 (S) 278, 281
Isa. 9:6-7 (SS) 538
Isa. 26:19 (S) 189
Isa. 28:1-6 (SS) 442
Isa. 33 (S) 449
Isa. 44:6-8 (S) 112
Isa. 45:1-6 (S) 134
Isa. 51:3 (S) 34
Isa. 55 (S) 517
Isa. 55:8 (S) 245
Isa. 55:13 (MS) 266

Jer. 6:14 (S) 458
Jer. 10:23 (S) 120
Jer. 18:1-3 (S) 81
Jer. 18:4 (S) 221
Jer. 35:5-10 (SS) 238

Ezek. 18:20-23 (SS) 466

Hosea 4:6 (S) 399

Micah 3:8 (S) 387

Hab. 2:12 (SS) 442
Hab. 2:14 (S) 399
Hab. 2:15 (SS) 77

Mal. 4:6 (S) 505

Matt. 1:21 (SS) 421
Matt. 2:11 (S) 535
Matt. 3:2 (S) 23
Matt. 5:5 (S) 311
Matt. 5:11 (SS) 133
Matt. 5:13 (SS) 331
Matt. 5:20 (S) 328
Matt. 6:9 (SS) 410
Matt. 6:10 (S) 108
Matt. 6:25 (SS) 49
Matt. 6:33 (S) 168
Matt. 6:33 (MS) 80
Matt. 8:23-27 (S) 73
Matt. 10:22 (MS) 435
Matt. 10:39 (MS) 207
Matt. 10:42 (S) 563

PAGE

Matt. 11:3 (S) 525
Matt. 11:7 (S) 197
Matt. 11:25-30 (S) 333
Matt. 13:46 (MS) 166
Matt. 16:13-20 (SS) 511
Matt. 16:14 (S) 37
Matt. 16:18 (MS) 90
Matt. 18:2 (MS) 287
Matt. 20:20 (S) 235
Matt. 20:22 (MS) 299
Matt. 20:24 (S) 373
Matt. 21:10 (S) 172
Matt. 22:37 (S) 417
Matt. 25:14-30 (SS) 523
Matt. 25:21 (S) 70
Matt. 25:22 (S) 83
Matt. 25:31-46 (SS) 553
Matt. 25:33 (S) 60
Matt. 26:27 (S) 260
Matt. 27:22 (SS) 153
Matt. 27:46 (S) 177
Matt. 28:1 (MS) 196
Matt. 28:6 (S) 193
Matt. 28:19 (MS) 412

Mark 1:15 (SS) 466
Mark 5:7 (S) 158
Mark 9:23 (S) 130
Mark 9:42-48 (SS) 77
Mark 10:1 (S) 315
Mark 11:9 (SS) 180
Mark 16:1-8 (S) 205
Mark 16:15 (SS) 284

Luke 1:78 (S) 78
Luke 1:78-79 (S) 498
Luke 2:10-12 (MS) 557
Luke 2:11 (S) 528
Luke 2:15 (S) 539
Luke 2:41-52 (S) 46
Luke 4:16 (S) 550
Luke 4:16-22:39 (S) 315
Luke 6:46 (SS) 123
Luke 7:9 (S) 360
Luke 9:48 (S) 426
Luke 9:51 (MS) 558
Luke 10:25-38 (S) 363
Luke 11:1 (S) 31
Luke 11:1 (SS) 112
Luke 12:49 (S) 348
Luke 13:1-5, 10-17 (SS) 26
Luke 13:18 (S) 181
Luke 14:1-14 (SS) 36
Luke 14:15-35 (SS) 49
Luke 15:1-10 (SS) 63
Luke 16:10-15 (SS) 87
Luke 17:1-4 (SS) 97
Luke 18:1-14 (SS) 112
Luke 19:1 (SS) 123

PAGE
Luke 19:10 (SS) 63
Luke 19:28-40 (SS) 180
Luke 20:9-21:38 (SS) 133
Luke 21:19 (MS) 515
Luke 22:1-38 (SS) 144
Luke 22:39 (SS) 153
Luke 23:33 (MS) 126
Luke 23:33 (S) 175
Luke 24:1-43 (SS) 192
Luke 24:36-53 (SS) 163
Luke 24:48-49 (SS) 180

John 1:1-14 (S) 509
John 3:1-17 (S) 303
John 3:3 (S) 46, 300
John 3:16 (SS) 421
John 3:16 (S) 270
John 3:30 (MS) 493
John 6:17 (S) 429
John 6:35 (S) 105
John 8:12 (S) 73
John 8:46-59 (S) 160
John 10:22-39 (S) 293
John 11:1-16 (S) 212
John 12:20 (S) 396
John 12:44-50 (S) 517
John 12:46 (S) 519
John 14:2 (SS) 553
John 14:6 (S) 426
John 14:20 (SS) 478
John 19:17 (MS) 219
John 19:41 (S) 186

Acts 1:1 (S) 392
Acts 1:6-12 (S) 248
Acts 1:8 (SS) 180
Acts 1:8 (S) 267
Acts 1:17 (MS) 457
Acts 2:1-4:31 (SS) 203
Acts 2:14 (MS) 370
Acts 2:23 (S) 216
Acts 2:38 (MS) 469
Acts 4:13 (S) 319, 384
Acts 4:32 (SS) 215
Acts 8:4 (SS) 227
Acts 9:1-3 (MS) 526
Acts 9:1-31 (SS) 251
Acts 9:10-11 (MS) 424
Acts 10:1-11:18 (SS) 263
Acts 11:19-30 (SS) 273
Acts 12:25-13:12 (SS) 284
Acts 13:13-14:28 (SS) 295
Acts 14:17 (S) 432
Acts 14:20 (S) 141
Acts 15:1-35 (SS) 307
Acts 15:36-18:21 (SS) 322
Acts 16:25 (S) 352
Acts 19:1-21:17 (SS) 326
Acts 19:2 (MS) 54

PAGE
Acts 26:19 (SS) 251
Rom. 1:16 (SS) 273
Rom. 1:17 (SS) 341
Rom. 2:29 (S) 285
Rom. 3:21-31 (SS) 341
Rom. 3:24 (S) 471
Rom. 5:20 (MS) 504
Rom. 7:21 (MS) 115
Rom. 8:14 (SS) 431
Rom. 8:19 (MS) 136
Rom. 8:28 (MS) 68

I Cor. 1:21 (S) 404
I Cor. 3:1-15 (SS) 314
I Cor. 4:2 (MS) 156
I Cor. 4:2 (SS) 523
I Cor. 4:7 (S) 399
I Cor. 5:9-13 (SS) 331
I Cor. 7:17 (SS) 511
I Cor. 8:1-13 (S) 256
I Cor. 8:6 (MS) 29
I Cor. 9:24 (S) 50
I Cor. 10:25-26 (S) 563
I Cor. 11:26 (SS) 144
I Cor. 15:26 (MS) 147
II Cor. 4:1 (S) 559
II Cor. 5:19 (S) 252

Gal. 1:11-12 (SS) 336
Gal. 2 (SS) 307
Gal. 3:1-29 (SS) 341
Gal. 3:23-29 (SS) 295
Gal. 4:4 (S) 532
Gal. 4:22-31 (S) 381
Gal. 6:14 (S) 199

Eph. 3:20-21 (S) 408
Eph. 4:1-16 (S) 411
Eph. 4:32 (SS) 97
Eph. 5:25 (SS) 511
Eph. 6:12 (S) 451
Eph. 8:8 (S) 426

Phil. 1:1-2 (S) 495
Phil. 2:4 (MS) 390
Phil. 2:12-18 (S) 95
Phil. 2:15 (S) 95
Phil. 3:7-16 (S) 455
Phil. 3:13 (MS) 482
Phil. 4:13 (MS) 379

Col. 2:6-7 (SS) 478

I Thess. 2:13 (SS) 336
I Thess. 5:17-18 (SS) 489
I Thess. 5:18 (S) 490
I Thess. 5:22 (SS) 77

I Tim. 3:16 (S) 263
I Tim. 4:1-7 (S) 474

PAGE

II Tim. 3:14-17 (SS) 336
II Tim. 3:16 (MS) 100
II Tim. 4:1-8(S) 436

Titus 2:1-8 (SS) 331

Heb. 5:9 (SS) 354
Heb. 7:2 (S) 102
Heb. 8:1-10:18 (SS) 354
Heb. 9:11-15 (S) 150
Heb. 10:6 (MS) 515
Heb. 11:1 (S) 42
Heb. 11:16 (MS) 402
Heb. 13:8 (S) 462

James 1:17-22 (SS) 347
James 4:7-10 (MS) 545
James 4:13-15 (S) 487

I Peter 4:10 (MS) 156
I Peter 4:12-19 (SS) 351

II Peter 3:14-16 (SS) 336

PAGE

I John 1:9 (SS) 454
I John 3:4-5 (S) 414
I John 3:13-18 (SS) 215, 358
I John 4:7-21 (SS) 350
I John 4:14 (SS) 538
I John 4:19 (SS) 500

Jude 3 (SS) 336

Rev. Chaps. 1-3 (SS) 367
Rev. 1:8 (S) 21
Rev. 1:18 (SS) 192
Rev. 2:7 (S) 138
Rev. 3:8 (S) 116
Rev. 4:8 (SS) 376
Rev. 7:9-17 (SS) 376
Rev. 12:1-15:4 (SS) 386
Rev. 21:1 (S) 308
Rev. 21:1-7 (SS) 398
Rev. 22:1 (S) 512
Rev. 22:17 (S) 273

PRAYER

When empty stands our chair,
  And working days are o'er
And dusk veils places where
  We shall be seen no more.

When song with us is mute,
  And voice itself is dumb,
And life a broken lute,
  And the journey's end has come;

One freedom will be left
  To us on this side death—
Of prayer none is bereft,
  While lasts the faintest breath.

UNASHAMED

If thorns must be somewhere
  To make us smart,
Alas, that we should bear
  Them in the heart.

But gracious Lord, do Thou
  Grant this,—that we
Upon an unshamed brow,
  Wear them with Thee.

CARGOES

Like empty ships from sea,
  That wait upon the tide,
The hours come to me,—
  But not to bide.

When the tide turns again—
  The last one for the day—
God knows what cargoes then
  They take away.

—*Alexander Louis Fraser*

JANUARY, FIRST SUNDAY

CALL TO WORSHIP: "Jehovah is my portion: I have said that I would observe Thy words. I entreated Thy favour with my whole heart: Be merciful unto me according to Thy word."
PSALM: 46.
PRELUDE: Andantino—*Lemare.*
ANTHEM: God So Loved the World—*Stainer.*
OFFERTORY: The Calm of Night—*Boex.*
POSTLUDE: Prelude in F—*Field.*
OFFERTORY SENTENCE: "Whoso offereth the sacrifice of thanksgiving glorifieth Me."
OFFERTORY PRAYER: Gladly we bring to Thee, Gracious Lord, that which is Thine. Require of us that which Thou needest in the days to come. We glory in Thy service; we bow to Thee and sing forth our praise.
BENEDICTION: The peace of God which passeth all understanding keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

SERMONS

THEME: ***Confidence For the Coming Days.***
(New Year).
HARRY W. STAVER.

TEXT: "I am Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last, the beginning and the end." Rev. 1:8.
HYMNS: "O Thou, Who by a Star didst Guide."—*St. Leonard, C. M.*
"A Hymn of Glory let us sing."—*Park St., L. M.*

According to the calendar we use, we are at the end of one year and the beginning of another. We don't get greatly excited over that fact, neither are we especially thrilled at the thought of it. That is not because we have become emotional dullards with age nor because our response machinery has broken down. It is simply that we have learned, by experience, the wisdom of the Master's words, "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." Just because we have come, in the physical arrangement of time, to the close of one twelve months and the commencement of another does not signify that we may expect any radical departures either in ourselves or the daily routines of our lives. In many respects "tomorrow will be as this day."

Yet this, also, is a fact to take account of, that life is not a closed circuit. It is possessed of infinite possibilities and there is always the chance that some adventure may make things for us other than they have been. At any rate, God has strewn our world with enough virtues and valors to keep faith and hope alive. And every New Year does come with the perennial urge of the Springtime to wake within us a persuasion of better things. "Hope springs eternal in the human breast" for the reason that "God hath set eternity in the heart."

The specific New Year text we have chosen is found three times, with slight variation, in the Book of Revelation. Whether it is of any concern, it is a point of interest that we find the text recorded, in the first instance, in the eighth verse down in the first chapter and in the second instance exactly eight verses up from the close of the last chapter, not counting the benediction verse which concludes the book. Then we find it a third time

in between. This is the text: "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End."

We have chosen this particular text, which is the grand pronouncement of the crowned Christ, not because it happens to contain phrases that make it adaptable to a New Year message, but because it embodies a great confidence which we may carry with us into the coming days and draw upon for our inspiration and encouragement. Emerson writes, in one of his essays, that the living of life "drains all our cisterns dry" and that if we are to go on living in any vital way those "cisterns" must be constantly replenished from the "fountains" that never run dry. In another place he cries out of those depletions which come to every man's soul, "Nerve us with incessant affirmations." Such a text as the one we have chosen does both of those things. Hear it again in the light of that aspect of things—"I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End."

Suppose, for the sake of being definite, that we set this text down into the midst of world conditions. Viewing those conditions, without mentioning them item by item, how can a man fare his way through this present world with its suspicions and hatreds and fears and have any confidence that mankind will ever come to a saving knowledge of the truth and ever achieve the triumph over the things of the flesh and the devil which the Spirit, alone, makes possible? It is because "the soul has faith in the sunlight" which came in Him who is described as "the Day-spring from on high" and whose purpose is declared to be "to shine upon them that sit in darkness and the shadow of death and to guide our feet into the way of peace." It is because "On Christ, the solid Rock, we stand" that we, like the Psalmist, "shalt not be afraid for the terror by night, nor the arrow that flieth by day; for the pestilence that walketh in darkness, nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday."

The world is on a rampage. That's the tragedy. But even a world on a rampage is not a world beyond hope of redemption. "God's arm is not shortened that it cannot save, neither His ear heavy that it cannot hear." That's the triumph in which God's people put their trust. "The blackest night that ever fell upon the earth," says George Eliot, "never put out the stars." And the Apostle Paul, experiencing things that might well tumble any man's soul into the Stygian darkness, can yet say, "I never lose heart." In a world where many men seemed inspired by evil to their "mad and atrocious actions" this word of Victor Hugo is somewhat of consequence, "In the presence of these climacteric catastrophes which devastate and revivify civilization one hesitates to judge their details. To blame or praise men on account of the results is almost like praising or blaming ciphers on account of the total. That which ought to happen, happens; the blast which ought to blow, blows. But the Eternal Serenity does not suffer from these north winds. Above revolutions Truth and Justice remain, as the starry sky lies above and beyond all tempests."

"An immense height," says the same author, "appears an exaggeration." That is true of some texts in the Scriptures. It is true of the text we have chosen. Yet there the towering thing stands, a supreme pronouncement, and back of that pronouncement the supreme Christ into whose hands God hath

given "all power both in heaven and in the earth," "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End." That is confidence for the coming days and for all of life. In faith let us exalt Him. In hope let us trust Him. In love let us obey Him. In devotion let us serve Him.

Epiphany, January 6.

THEME: ***A Real Amendment of Life.***

PAUL R. KIRTS.

SCRIPTURE: Matt. 2:13-23.
TEXT: "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Matt. 3:2.
HYMNS: "God Calling Yet! Shall I not Hear?"—*Hamburg, L. M.*
"Approach, My Soul, the Mercy Seat."—*Burford, C. M.*

Emerging from the seclusion of his earlier years, John the Baptist, the forerunner of the Messiah, appeared as a preacher in the wilderness adjoining the Jordan. In his teaching he laid the main stress not upon the ceremonial law but upon righteousness. He regarded the Messiah's Kingdom as a spiritual realm in which right living is the rule. Not descent from Abraham but integrity of character gave a man claim to be a member of this realm. Hence above all things repentance and amendment of life were necessary. John impressed his hearers with the fact that repentance consists not in mere sorrow for sin, but in a changed life.

I. It is "your repentance" (Luke 3:8—see note in RV; so translated by Moffatt). It is your duty to repent, John the Baptist told those who gathered to hear him. The obligation rests upon you he said. The aim of his preaching was to make his converts pious Jews of the orthodox type. At the same time, the views he set forth were of a far more spiritual kind than those generally current. He put the emphasis upon having a right heart and a good life. Having the appearance of being moral without an experience of turning from evil to good as a way of life is useless. You must repent.

We note first that repentance is turning away from sin. There must be sorrow for sin. Take, for example, the experience of young Isaiah in the temple. As he saw the vision of the Lord in all his holiness upon the high throne, he felt the offensiveness of his unclean heart. There in the white light streaming from the Source he beheld the impurities and flaws in his own character.

The sense of sin does not become painfully acute until we catch a view of God in all his purity. Unless we practice the presence of God our moral sensitiveness loses its edge. Right and wrong no longer appear as black and white, but shade off into an intermediate gray. The awareness of God means consciousness of our own shortcomings and offenses. As we come into his presence we feel how unfit we are to stand before him. When the imperfection is revealed for what it is, we are ashamed. Guilt comes upon us and we confess our utter unworthiness.

Contrition denotes deep sorrow for sin, growing out of love toward God. Realizing that God has, of his boundless love, given up his only Son that everyone who believes on him may have the abundant life of communion

with the heavenly Father, a man who is keenly conscious of evil in his heart feels pain.

But this burden of grief can be lifted by making a clean breast of sin before God. David, crushed with moral disaster, humbly prayed for pardon. Well did he know that it was God against whom he had sinned:

> "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned,
> And done that which is evil in thy sight."
> —Ps. 51:4.

He had sinned against man was well as against God. But as all human obligations have their foundation in God's law, so all sin against man is included in the one fact of offense against God. Confession should be made to those who have been injured as well as to God.

Repentance, involving contrition and confession, is not complete until there is amendment of life. The sense of guilt and the admission of evil are valid only if there follows a moral and spiritual about face. In true repentance there must be a turning from sin and a turning to God, just as Saul of Tarsus, on the way to Damascus, was turned about. Saul, persecutor of Christians, became Paul, the Apostle to the Gentiles.

We may clarify this point by asking, What is the essential difference between Judas' betrayal of Christ and Peter's denial of Christ? The morning after Judas had saluted Jesus with a kiss, thus betraying him to the chief priests, the traitor, now in calmer mood, saw that Jesus was condemned and that he was likely to be put to death. Then he awoke to the enormity of his guilt, and went to the chief priests with the confession, "I have sinned in that I have betrayed innocent blood," and offered to return the money. Then these priests with seared consciences turned on him and said, "What is that to us? see thou to that." On which he cast down the silver pieces in the temple, and went and hanged himself (Matt. 27:3-5). The son of perdition felt guilty, but did not seek mercy and pardon.

Peter's denial of Jesus during the trial before the Jewish authorities was threefold (Matt. 26:69 ff.). While he was still making the third denial, the cock crew (Luke 22:60b). "And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter."

Then comes the moving scene: "And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how that he said unto him, Before the cock crow this day thou shalt deny me thrice. And he went out, and wept bitterly." (Luke 22:61, 62.)

Peter, deeply contrite for his sin, sought mercy and found it. He was abundantly pardoned. At the end of his personal association with Christ, our Lord lovingly probed his heart (John 21:15 ff.). Before restoring him, Jesus required from him a threefold confession of love. Peter became a shepherd to the sheep, a leader in the Church, and we may believe suffered martyrdom.

II. The motive for repentance, for a real change of heart and life, as John the Baptist stated it, was the nearness of the Kingdom of heaven. He announced a new divine method, proclaimed the advent of the Kingdom of God and the baptism of the Holy Spirit (Matt. 3:2, 11), to prepare the people in intellect and heart for the reception of Christ. He urged the neces-

sity of immediate and sincere repentance, the special reason assigned being that the kingdom of heaven was at hand.

John the Baptist and our Lord (Matt. 4:17) declared that the Kingdom of God had begun. Jesus taught his disciples to pray for its coming (Matt. 6:10), instructed his apostles on their first mission to say that it was at hand (Matt. 10:7), spoke of it afterward as having come (Matt. 12:28), and illustrated its nature by parables. The new administration has two names, the Kingdom of heaven and the Kingdom of God.

The Baptist saw a kingdom dawning—"the kingdom of heaven." It was the realized reign of the righteous God. It was because his conception of the Kingdom was so ethical that his condemnation of unethical Judiasm was so unsparing. The priests and teachers of the people he called a "generation of vipers," seeking his baptism in the hope of escaping "the wrath to come." He believed that a divine society could be set up only by men who were God-possessed. Hence he cried, "Confess your sins!"

Observe, moreover, that the Kingdom implied a King. The prophets dreaming of the golden age thought of it as founded by a divine Prince, a Messiah. A day of victory and retribution would come. To them the future was God's, though the present was man's. The Messiah personified to the prophetic spirit the divine judgment against wrong and the vindication of right; he was to live to do the will of God, and cause it to be done. The ideas of the King and the Kingdom thus inseparably blended in prophecy, appeared as linked in the mind of John. His preaching was essentially concerned with the coming of a Person; the King made the Kingdom. Without him it could not be; with him it had to be. In his prophetic word ancient prophecy lived again, and waited to welcome him who was to fulfill its hopes and realize its truths.

The Kingdom is in nature spiritual. Commenced on earth with the royal ministry of Christ, it shall become totalitarian (Matt. 25:31-46). The Kingdom of God is the whole spiritual commonwealth of God's children, the true company of all faithful people. It is represented by the organized or visible church, but is more comprehensive and greater than the visible church in any age or all ages.

In the model prayer our Lord taught his hearers to say, "Thy kingdom come," which means, May justice triumph over injustice, truth over lies, kindness over barbarity, purity over lust, freedom over force. It is a prayer for the peace and unity of the Church, for the growth in grace of its members, and for the turning of the world from madness and war to sanity and peace. Chiefly it is a prayer that the Kingdom be hastened.

The keynote of John's preaching before he met Jesus was: "Repent, the Reign of heaven is near." (Matt. 3:2—Moffatt.) A new administration was to be inaugurated which called for a real amendment of life. There was need for repentance, for turning away from sin to God, since a mightier One was coming. The Baptist threatened the multitudes with an avenger of sin. The King was a Judge. What he needed was a prepared people; what he would find was a brood of vipers. To him purity of blood was nothing, purity of heart alone was good. The avenger was coming, fan in hand, to

divide the chaff from the wheat, to gather the one into his garner, to burn up the other with unquenchable fire.

John, the greatest of the prophets, gave notice of the new administration of God's spiritual benefits. Jesus, in the Sermon on the Mount, made explicit the requirements for membership in this Kingdom. Only the poor in spirit, the meek, those who want to be right with God, can enter. Only those who are truly sorry for sin and earnestly desire to lead a better life before God and man can be members in his glorious Kingdom and have blissful communion with God the heavenly Father here and in the world to come.

PRAYER

Hear us, Lord our God, in this hour of need, as we stand on the threshold of a new day, a new year. Before Thee we confess our sins of selfishness, hatred, lust, and the general under-estimation of the value of man in Thy sight. The sins of yesteryear seem as the night, where no light shines to point the way, and only through Thy grace may we know how ghastly and hideous our faults are in Thy sight.

Help us, Heavenly Father, to erase from our being those things which keep us afar from Thee, help us to understand the greatness of Thy love and forgiveness. Help us to repent deeply enough to furrow a new path according to Thy will, in which we may walk in love and sympathy, brotherhood and understanding, knowing Thy guiding hand in each hour and each act.

Bless Thou our undertakings in Thy Name, both individually and in fellowship with one another. Help us to yearn for Thy loving Presence in every waking hour, thus making the days ahead fruitful for the coming of Thy Kingdom among men. We ask in the Name of Jesus Christ, Thy Son. Amen.

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

Jesus and Human Affliction.

LESSON: Luke 13. Print Luke 13:1-5, 10-17.

GOLDEN TEXT: "We have not a high priest that cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities." Hebrews 4:15.

DEVOTIONAL READING: Exodus 3:7-12.

INTER. & SR. TOPIC: Jesus and our Misfortunes.

Y. P. & ADULTS: A Christian Interpretation of Affliction.

Refer to the corresponding account as found in Mark 1:21, Luke 6:1-11, and Luke 14:1-6. Luke reports a series of Christ's words and deeds from His final journey to Jerusalem. Some men came to Jesus with the story of a massacre of Christ's own people, Galileans, whom the Roman soldiers had killed while they were offering sacrifices in the Temple. Such murders in the holy precincts were common in Pilate's day numbering at one Passover twenty thousand. The Judeans evidently thought the massacre was a penalty deserved by the Galileans for their special sins but Christ quickly repudiated the idea and turned the tables by reminding the Judeans how

a tower had recently fallen on some of their own countrymen at the Pool of Siloam.

There was and still is today an oriental philosophy prevalent which looks upon disaster as a direct stroke of God. Jesus here repudiates such ideas. See verses 10-17. Jesus heals the poor woman and is criticised by the Pharisees in whose eyes ritual was more beautiful than mercy. To Jesus every day was a day for the exercise of mercy and healing, the relieving of distress and human misery.

In healing this woman our Lord did five things. He compassionately *saw* her, He *called* her, He *healed* her, He *touched* her, He *lifted her up*.

There is nothing in the Christian faith that exempts the Christian today from suffering and loss. The Christian is nowhere guaranteed against economic loss, nor will he be repaid doubly for losses incurred in his life. There is no book of Job in the New Testament. What is the attitude of Christ today to human suffering? He sympathizes with us in it. He Himself knew hunger and thirst and pain and a death of horrible anguish. Second, He strengthens us in it. "My grace is sufficient for thee." He blesses us through it. Some of the richest fruit of life is born in suffering and sorrow. He makes us a blessing to others because of it. The calm courage and steadfast faith of His followers in hours of suffering, loss and distress is an argument which an unbelieving world can never answer. Buddha came to the conclusion that, "Existence and suffering are one." Life at the present time seems to be decidedly tragic because we are passing through an age of sweeping transition. The Christian should thank God that in Christ we have found the answer to the riddle of suffering. Patiently borne for Jesus' sake, it is the road to glory.

EVENING SERMON

THEME: ***Democracy Needs Religion.***

RICHARD K. MORTON.

SCRIPTURE: Psalm 33.

TEXT: "Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord; and the people whom he hath chosen for his inheritance." Psalm 33:12.

HYMNS: "God of our Father, Whose Almighty Hand."—*National Hymn,* 10 10, 10 10.
"God the All-merciful: Earth hath Forsaken."—*Russian Hymn,* 11 10, 11 9.

Democracy faces totalitarianism; love faces hatred; justice faces injustice; religion faces paganism today more squarely and inescapably than for centuries. The burning issue right now is this: How shall we save democracy? What shall the Church and all religious people do in the face of the threat to established ideals and institutions?

Militarism has gone so far, that it can be arrested only by proper preparation on our part, that a vicious force may not wipe from the earth that which is irreplaceable and precious among us.

We must, as a Christian people and nation, make it plain that we are doing this out of a feeling for our own safety, love of our own institutions, and concern for the welfare of all men.

There are practical tasks to be performed immediately in the name of our Lord: providing help for refugees and oppressed of all races, classes, and creeds; securing homes for children from lands visited by or threatened with military violence; establishing means of maintaining our Christian fellowship even with those in belligerent lands on both sides; giving generously to all causes for the alleviation of human misery; organizing classes and other groups for the serious and deep study of the causes of this crisis and for the setting up of means to remove them; establishing clearly and definitely the Church's desire for a guarantee of a new world following this disaster to civilization.

Most of us are occupied already with such practical works. We are also trying to make up our minds about what our national policy should be: how much we should intervene in Europe, how much we should do for its people, how strongly we should insist on keeping out German or other European influences from this continent or South America, and corollary questions.

We must, however, go behind and beyond such questions.

This crisis and judgment has come to us all because democracy and humanity in general has been without God. Like the children of Israel, we have repeatedly, wilfully, and wantonly departed from the way of righteousness and followed our own selfish, unjust, and disastrous devices. We thought that what some of our leaders preached years ago was just idealistic chatter, fit only for the precociously religious. Now we find that they spoke of the very nature of things.

Our trouble lies not so much in the threat of a power without, as in the weakness of a lack of power and love within. As a brilliant and timely editorial in the Commonweal said last summer, "our society is morally lacking," and its unrepented guilt is deep. Those who believe in human oppression and exploitation are not half as dangerous in their designs, as those who, having liberty and opportunity and faith, let them go by neglect. Totalitarianism, in large part, is a creation of democracy's own faults. Democracy has for years let greed, selfishness, class strife, injustice, and all the rest flourish unchallenged, and now it all comes to flower in democracy's present adversary.

Democracy needs religion. All civilization needs religion. We have failed in a military sense because some while ago we had already failed in a spiritual, social, and moral sense. Foreign correspondents of leading newspapers have been steadily revealing to us a startling tale of corruption, inefficiency, and treachery in high places in military, social, and diplomatic ranks among the democracies, and showing just how moral rottenness has crept into the very fibre of our being. Here is the explanation of why God has allowed these things. We have a God who allows his children freedom and expects them to make great choices and undertake great adventures. When they do not, disaster results. Disaster of this kind can become a fact in God's world, but it is not at all by His will.

In past months I have seen these ideas repeated in Catholic, Jewish, and Protestant publications. Dr. Charles Clayton Morrison, in a sermon in the Christian Century, July 3, 1930, likened Hitler to Sargon of Assyria, being

used by God as an agent to bring men to account. Dr. Morrison, in his arresting and timely sermon, urged that we seek not to take the place of Britain, should that empire fall, but rather to take leadership in removing the situations, forces, evils, and miseries which bring about such a crisis.

It is not enough to say that Versailles was a bad treaty, and that Hitler is a monster, and that we must gird to defend democracy. We must somehow crystallize and apply the message of religion so that the ultimate result will be a world of justice and peace and truth. Dr. Frank Kingdon maintained that these two "world wars" represent the last phases of belligerent nationalism. We may well hope that they represent the dying power of international combat. Oswald Spengler outlined, many years ago, in his "Decline of the West," a theory of cycles in history. One hopes that he may be right and that this is the end of a cycle of warfare and human domination and exploitation.

Dr. Sherwood Eddy, in an article in Zion's Herald points out how many errors the nations had made in allowing the present crisis to develop, and then urged immediate help to the Allies. One would follow this only if there went with it a clear understanding that we insisted on a better world: not anyone's victory, but an understanding that men are through with this sort of thing.

A statement issued about that time by the Federal Council called attention to our common guilt and responsibility. This brought recognition of man's folly and his acknowledgment that he needs God.

There will be no solution of critical military problems of our day until there is an attendant solution of economic, social, political, and moral problems, and until man turns to God and finds in Him his blessing, his refuge, and his strength.

MID-WEEK SERMON

NOTE

"A Credible Creed"—A *tentative* confession of faith was submitted to the General Assembly of the United Free Church of Scotland, May 1921, and the Assembly, after due consideration, recommended it "to the interest and study of the members of the Church." The articles are regarded as a brief expression, "in terms of present-day thought, of the great Christian certainties and of the Christian ideal of human life." This statement will be found in "Christian Ways of Salvation" by George W. Richards (Macmillian). The articles are used in the following eleven outlines because of the writer's deep conviction that 1941 will demand of the Christian pulpit high thinking and positive statement of our basic beliefs. The reader will accept or reject as his mind and conscience dictates, but they will provide starting-points for the development and expression of one's own beliefs.

—W. T. P.

THEME: ***Believing in God.***

TEXT: I Corinthians 8:6.

Scientific hypothesis: an explanation of known facts. The theory of God explains life, the universe.

Believing in God: To faith the theory of God explains the universe better than anything else. Behind and within all the changing, puzzling phenomena

faith sees a Being of Power, of Intelligence, of Moral Purpose. My own nature demands God. My needs, my sense of moral accountability, my impulse to worship—only God meets these. Jesus Christ believed in God.

The Character of God: "We believe in one Almighty God, Creator of all things, Father of all men, only Ruler and Judge of the world, holy and wise and loving. We believe it is his will that men should know him; and through the life, death and victory of the Lord Jesus Christ we have learned that God loves men, seeks their good, bears all their sorrows, suffers for their sins, and will triumph in his glorious purpose over all evil at the last."

God is present: Christ prayed to him. He is creative: there is mind and will behind the universe. He provides: Jesus called him Father. He is responsive: he answers our hearts—2 Cor. 4:6 (Goodspeed).

The Service of God: "We unto him." God will incarnate himself in us—Judges 6:34, margin. "There is a lump of greasy pigment on the end of Michael Angelo's hog-bristle brush, and by the time it has been laid on the stucco, there is something there, that all men with eyes recognize as Divine. Think what it means: it is the power of bringing God into the world—making God manifest."—Burnes-Jones. Christ manifested God in the flesh. It is our task to continue that manifestation.

TOPICS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE'S SOCIETIES

CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR: Y. P.—What am I Living For? II Pet. 3:13-18.
Jr.—Abraham Trusted and Obeyed God. Gen. 12:1-8.
LUTHER LEAGUE: Sr.—Letting Christ Shine Out. (Epiphany.) II Cor. 4:1-6.
Y. P.—January Topic—Living on Tip-Toe. 1. Living Abundantly. I Thess. 4:1-2; 9-10.
Inter.—Why We have a Church. Acts 2:41-47.
WALTHER LEAGUE: January Topic—Living With Yourself—Your Success.
1. Motive. 2. Desire for Success.

FOR THE BULLETIN BOARD

Don't wait to bring your flowers.
Many who confess plead not guilty.
You can't accept the Christ without accepting the cross.
You can be the master or servant of your things.
If your soul is saved save a soul.
Your heart will be bound to good or bad.
Earth is full of heaven for the one who seeks it.
Is your door barred?
Dawn begins in splendor.
When ill thoughts die good ones can be born.

JANUARY, SECOND SUNDAY

CALL TO WORSHIP: "My son, attend to my words; incline thine ear unto my sayings."
PSALM: 27.
PRELUDE: Adagio, (5th Sonata)—*Guilmant.*
ANTHEM: Build Thee More Stately Mansions—*Andrews.*
OFFERTORY: Morning Prayer—*Costa.*
POSTLUDE: Adagio Moderato—*Seifert.*
OFFERTORY SENTENCE: "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper that love thee. Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces."
OFFERTORY PRAYER: Heavenly Father, our love for Thee is testified to in the gifts of life we bring Thee, some in service in Thy Kingdom, some in goods to carry on that which Thou hast designed. We place our faith in Thy hands, knowing that guidance will not be withheld. Accept these gifts, and cause our lives to witness for Thee as the Perfect One.
BENEDICTION: Take heed to the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfill it. Grace be with you.

SERMONS

THEME: *The Need of Prayer.*

(The Nurture of a Prayer Life.)

W. J. REES.

TEXT: "Lord, teach us to pray." Luke 11:1.
HYMNS: "Lord, Teach us how to Pray aright."—*St. James, C. M.*
"Come, My Soul, Thy Suit Prepare."—*Pleyel's Hymn,* 7 7, 7 7.

The contemporary climate to which we have all been exposed is not conducive to the development and nurture of a prayer life. Prayer is substantially an act of acknowledgment, of utter dependence upon an other greater than self.

The atmosphere of modernity has created an appetite for the coarse bread of self-sufficiency. We have developed a dietetic capacity for such menus as "the go-getter," "the self-made man," "the efficiency expert." S. C. Carpenter, in his book entitled "The Bible View of Life," says, "A stomach which has for years been titillated by a diet of cocktails, and savories will hardly be able to entertain a plain regimen of wholesome food."

To change the figure, the "go-getter," the "efficiency expert," and like creations of modern living have been our idols, and the tragically presumptuous measures of Henley's "Invictus" our creed, as we have stood in mock confidence within the walls of our temples of self-sufficiency. Now this conduct is definitely logical. If man be the captain of his own soul, master of his fate, then, of course, to indulge in a prayer life is indicative of a stupid refusal to accept the facts of existence. If there be no reality beyond ourselves, upon which or whom we are dependent,—if there be no God—, then the very mention of prayer becomes an intellectual obscenity.

This secular mood was allowed, like a barbarian horde, to invade the sanctuary. Indeed we escorted it to the meeting house and like unsuspecting carriers of disease germs, we were unconscious of its insidious effects upon our religious outlook, and consequently the conduct of our lives. It resulted in a wholesale amputation of our religious practices. And lo and behold, we

entertained with incredible assurance, that we were slaying the dragon of Puritan tyranny. The repressive stupidities of our religious forbears shall no longer lay us low. We played the part of efficiency experts with our religious practices. Our forbears, so we argued, were fanatical overdoers of the practice of the religious life. No one who is really honest will deny the element of truth in the charge. But let's be consistently honest. This change of outlook from the religious to the secular was precipitated primarily by our growing sense of self-sufficiency, our ability to get along grandly, unimpeded by the superstition of God and His Sovereignty over all life.

One of the most repellent (because it was deemed so unnecessary) of religious practices, to this secular temper, was the persistent practice of prayer. Self-sufficiency and prayer are a contradiction of terms.

Now don't let anyone say, "*That picture is not true of me,*" and consequently become hurt by it, (we moderns bruise so easily)—or puffed up with a sense of pharisaic pride. What I have attempted to enunciate was not meant to be true of any one individual, or particular group of individuals. What I wish to impress upon you is this, that there is sufficient truth in it for each of us to take to heart and ponder over it seriously.

How different the mood and temper of the early church. The early church was a praying church, its fellowship a praying people. Of that the records leave no room for reasonable doubt. One of the fundamental reasons why the church has manifested a woeful incompetence to grapple successfully with the menace of secularism is that she has ceased to be in any thoroughgoing sense of the term a praying church and her people a praying people.

Again when we seek the source of power in the lives of the great men of the church, we find it is the fact that they took time to pray. Facing tasks, demanding resources greater than they possessed, they threw themselves confidently upon the unfailing and inexhaustible resources of God. Communion with God was a necessity. It was the life-giving oxygen of the spiritual climate. Then there are those nameless thousands with the light of assurance and certainty, illumining their travail-furrowed countenances. And we enquire, "Whence this power, this prodigious ability to rise triumphant over the inexorable constancy of change, often ruthless in its stampede over life's highway?" And again the answer comes back, communion with God, the redemptive fellowship of prayer.

Then what of the Master of men, Jesus Christ our Lord? In the gospel according to Luke, we have a number of inspiring word portraits of the praying Christ, "Christ upon his knees." Dr. Gossip, the great Scotch preacher, says, "It grows very striking once you notice it, how often with Luke as guide, we come on Christ upon his knees so rapt in prayer that we do not interrupt him, though we back out with a hot-faced feeling of intrusion." It is as though the author Luke was desirous that his readers never forget the source of the Master's victorious power, the power which enabled Him to see it through. It is the constant refrain of all the gospels, "and Jesus went apart for a while that He might pray."

In much present-day Christianity, this urgent accent of prayer has been muffled. This constant need of communion with God is not felt with any

profound sense of urgency. The poet has eloquently expressed the need we so blunderingly sense for ourselves,

> "O Sabbath rest by Galilee
> O calm of hills above,
> Where Jesus knelt to share with Thee
> The silence of eternity,
> Interpreted by love."

Prayer does not occupy a place of importance in the lives of many of us. Prayer calls us to a halt. It is the Stop, Look and Listen sign on life's crossings. (Would it be carrying the analogy too far by saying that the mortality list at crossings is tragically high?) We are enamored of the socalled principle of perpetual motion, and our lives in this respect are more analogous to a belching locomotive, than the deep and eloquent silence of a mountain lake, embraced by the nocturnal splendor of a midnight moon.

The plain simple fact is we do not believe in prayer, that is, *really believe in it*. We seem to be inextricably enmeshed in the din of our boisterous activities, and prayer does seem to be an extravagant waste of time. Yet the gospel writers make it evident that Christ was victorious through it. The well-spring of His power resided in His eager, constant fellowship and communion with God. And we shall hardly manage otherwise. Let us take a glance at those things which sent Jesus to His knees . . . kept Him in the constant company of God. It is a rewarding exercise.

There is gratitude, which evoked from the deeps of His soul the prayer of thanksgiving. He gave thanks for Calvary and His opportunity for service there. There was thanks for the countless daily mercies and little services, all of which consonant with the spirit of the time, we are prone to take for granted. We find the need for a sense of certainty sending Jesus to His knees. "Jesus kept within sight of God, because He found life difficult to live aright, yes even He, and He wanted to have certainty." Gethsemane always precedes Calvary. In every crisis of His life, we see Christ upon His knees, communing with God. And then He rises "and comes forth, with His mind made up . . . Master of the situation, let what may befall."

Lastly we find that sheer fatigue of soul, the need for spiritual replenishment sent Jesus to God. He felt the weight of the world exact a heavy toll of the soul.

The world in which we live is geared exceptionally high. We are streamlined for speed. Society is breaking down 'neath its gruelling impact. Nervous breakdown abounds, and neurosis is common. We need to take time out to be still. It is almost a lost art. To keep healthy we must take time out, though it be for but a fleeting moment, between our tasks, "to get a breath of pure air from the hills of God." Busy and bustled though we be, and living in the world as we must, if we are to keep the pace and run the race, we must make room in our lives for God. We need the sustaining embrace of His everlasting arms. Then even though the frost of seeming failure threatens the soul, we shall be able to come through with a glorious courage, and poise, because the horrible darkness of the hour constrained us to fall back on God, and feeling Him there, we arise to go on unafraid.

Life is not easy for any of us. It is fraught with the soul-tearing agony of temptation. It is cursed and damned with the benumbing spectacle of broken lives. It is vitiated with the callous whims of circumstance. It is sodden with the poignant tears of bereaved, prematurely deprived of ones dearly loved. It is horribly scarred by the assaults of sin both personal and social. Yes, that is the melee we call life. But above it all, "towering o'er the wrecks of time," I see a Cross, and from that Cross there comes a voice, the timbre of which has redemptive depths. 'Tis the voice of Him who conquered life, and He is saying, "Don't stop dreaming your dreams; don't let the seeming futility of life bludgeon you into hopeless submission; don't grow cynical, embittered, and disillusioned. Get nearer to God, get down on your knees. That is the cure. Nurture your prayer-life, for 'tis the pathway that leads to the hill-tops of transfiguration, and sustaining uplift." Yes it is so. 'The Lord is my refuge and my strength of whom or what shall I be afraid.' "

First Sunday After Epiphany.

THEME: *Beauty for Ashes.*

WILLIAM R. SIEGART.

SCRIPTURE: Matt. 2:1-12.
TEXT: "To give unto them beauty for ashes, oil of joy for mourning, garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness." Isaiah 61:3.
HYMNS: "Lord, it belongs not to my care."—*Tallis Ordinal, C. M.*
"Father, whate'er of Earthly Bliss."—*St. Bernard, C. M.*

Here is a text which is beautiful. Isaiah, the great prophet, was telling the people of Israel, about his call to the prophetic office. He was to bring the word of the Lord to the poor in spirit, to heal the broken-hearted, bind up the wounds of those who were injured in contact with sin, and bring back to the Father all those who had strayed. He was to give unto them beauty for ashes, oil of joy for mourning, garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness.

This is the lesson which Jesus read in the synagogue at Nazareth as He began His ministry, and it is the chapter on which He based His first sermon. The uproar that sermon caused has not died down to this day because He told the people gathered about that "this day hath this prophecy been fulfilled in your ears." Jesus was the consummation of this revelation, but we see already at work in Isaiah's day the great Spirit of God trying to bring to man beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness.

Israel was greatly in need of such comfort, and the latter half of Isaiah is full of similar statements. Apparently the foundation had been taken from under her religious structure because she had been removed from the land which Jehovah had promised her forever. This required a new orientation of religious thinking, and a new perspective of the religious life.

Israel was full of sorrow, so much so that the beautiful songs of the temple and of the fields, so dear to a shepherd people, were no longer heard, and the harps were hung upon the trees. The people, as are all oriental people, were

highly emotional and they wept night and day. There was mourning everywhere.

It was the custom of the Israelites when in deep sorrow to rend their garments and to cover their heads with ashes to denote resignation and grief. They went into mourning, as we would now say. The spirit of heaviness was upon them and they seemed not able to overcome it.

This was a sorry sight and into the picture stepped the great Isaiah with His message of deliverance. "Behold," he said, "God seeks to give you beauty instead of your ashes, oil of joy for your mourning, and to give you a garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness."

That was a great message and clearly foreshadowed the ministry of the Christ. Isaiah was a messenger of God to these captive tribes to tell them that God was with them as always. To him was given the task which is of great importance, that of making real to a sorrowful people the nearness of God and the comfort and joy of religion.

Ofttimes in periods of great joy we forget all about religion. But in moments of sorrow and grief we desire to return to the comforts of religion, and the person who cannot return to this blessed assurance of God loses greatly in life, in fact, loses a very vital part of life itself.

Emma Calvé, in her autobiography, says that of all the equipment necessary for a great singer, that of religion is of the most importance, because, she says, " 'tis God who gives us the beauties of music, and 'tis only a soul attuned to God, or as Trine would say, in tune with the Infinite, who can correctly sing the beauties of music."

That is why, perhaps, it is said that of all music that which is purely religious, or deals with the soul and God, is the most beautiful.

But it is in every phase of life that we find the need of religion. The soul without it is like the picture of well dressed persons drawn by Dante in his Divine Comedy:

> Their outside
> Was overlaid with gold, dazzling to the view,
> But leaden all within.

The soul without religion has the ashes, mourning and spirit of heaviness, but never the beauty, joy or praise of the soul whose trust is stayed in God.

Note the figures Isaiah uses to denote the change which he is to promise his people. There is beauty, joy and praise. Surely here are three great things intimately associated with the true religious life.

Beauty, that is everywhere, and is an attribute of God.

Joy, that is a fundamental part of the religion of the true God. Religious folk are not to be long-faced. They have one of the greatest things in the world, and that is the possession of an association with God.

Praise is the expressive response of the soul to its Maker. Even David makes "all" praise the Creator, and religious souls unite to swell the joy of their God and of themselves when they echo the praise of the Father.

All in all, God does not seek to destroy, but to replace the sorrows of life with that better joy which is His own.

PRAYER

Far from the hectic rush of life's market place, in the quiet of this worship hour, we have sought after Thee O God; and we have found Thee a well-spring of living water. We have looked up unto the hills of worship from whence cometh our help, and our strength, and Thou hast entered into our fevered lives, and made them strong again with the strength that comes from Thee and Thee alone. No matter what the morrow brings, we shall stand triumphant victors in Christ. We shall fear no evil, for Thou art ever with us, Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort and strengthen and sustain us. Accept now O God our Father, the thanks of our hearts for Thine eternal vigilance over us, Thine infinite compassion towards us and the life eternal that Thou hast prepared for us through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.—Rees.

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

Christ's Valuation of Personality.

LESSON: Luke 14:1-14.

GOLDEN TEXT: "Is not the life more than the food, and the body than the raiment?" Matthew 6:25.

DEVOTIONAL READING: Matthew 6:25-34.

INTER. & SR. TOPIC: Christ's Care for Me.

Y. P. & ADULTS: Christ's Concern for Persons.

The events of this lesson occurred on a Sabbath early in January, 30 A.D., in the house of a Pharisee in Perea near Bethany at the ford of the Jordan near Jericho. Jesus was a man of human sympathy, of social instincts, and mingled freely with His fellowmen, worshiping with them and eating with them in their homes. The lesson today gives us a scene in the life of our Lord sketched in considerable detail as He sat at the Sabbath feast in the house of this Pharisee. He entered with the guests and took a leading part in the conversation which ensued. He was never forgetful of His mission. Today His foes are unusually severe. His host, while outwardly courteous, was inwardly hostile. Jesus showed His unfailing grace and His desire for the highest good both of His host and of the other guests. In the assemblage Jesus noticed a man suffering from disease. He was conscious that the Pharisees were watching Him and would object strenuously to His affecting any cure on the Sabbath Day. He asked them whether such a cure would be lawful. While they were hesitating, He healed the sufferer and then bitterly rebuked the hypocrisy of the critics.

Jesus noted when the guests were seated that each one sought for himself the most desirable place and took occasion also to rebuke selfish ambition and to teach a lesson in humility. He then proceeds to teach a lesson in charity, namely that we are not to confer benefits with a view to receiving benefits in return. To Jesus, the human being was the most precious thing in the world, whether clothed in royal robes or in rags.

No idea in the world ever had power over the lives of men until it got itself embodied some way in a personality. Here precisely lies the sig-

nificance of Jesus' coming to earth. It was necessary that the love of God be transferred from a vague idea into terms of human personality so God wrapped His love up in human form and sent it to earth in the form of Jesus Christ.—A person who could look directly into men's eyes, lay tender, compulsive hands upon them, speak to them in appealing tones. Personality is indestructible. Jesus taught this over and over again. Dives was the same sort of man beyond death as he had been on earth.

Jesus' emphasis in this lesson in humility is not to be misunderstood. Self-exaltation seeks the place, the honor, and the reward, while true humility seeks the usefulness, the character, and the love. Jesus was Himself the best illustration of His own teaching. "The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto but to minister and to give His life a ransom for many."

EVENING SERMON

THEME: ***The Prophet Jeremiah.***

CLARENCE EDWARD MACARTNEY.

TEXT: "And others, Jeremiah." Matt. 16:14.
HYMNS: "Thy way, not Mine, O Lord."—*Ibstone,* 6 6, 6 6.
"O God of Jacob, by Whose Hand."—*St. Peter, C. M.*

Jeremiah is in many ways the saddest, loneliest, and grandest man in the Bible. Nations produce their greatest men at the beginning of their history or at the end of their history, in the throes of birth or in the throes of dissolution. Jeremiah is the prophet of Israel's sunset. We behold him standing like an iron pillar amid the smoke and flames and darkness of Jerusalem's overthrow and destruction. The span of his life covers one of the most dramatic and catastrophic periods of history.

The message that Jeremiah was called to deliver he spoke with word, and also with sign. With poetic imagination he imagines Rachel rising out of her tomb on the way to Bethlehem and weeping over her children as she sees them pass by on the long road to exile. Jeremiah was the greatest of the illustrative preachers. Now we see him going away down to the river Euphrates and digging up a girdle that he had been commanded to bury there, and bringing this marred girdle to Jerusalem to display to the people as a sign of the nation's corruption. And now we find him getting his sermon at the potter's house, where he asks his hearers to watch the potter as he takes a marred vessel and fashions it anew, for the clay is still soft and ductile; the symbol of what God could yet have done with Israel if the people had repented.

Another day we find him at the potter's house again; this time selecting a bottle that has been finished, baked and hardened, which cannot now be changed or worked anew, and carrying it down into the dark valley of Hinnom, and there breaking it to pieces before the people, a symbol of the irrevocableness of Israel's doom and judgment. Again we see him bringing the Rechabites, whose ancient ancestors had pledged them to total abstinence, into the palace, and setting before them wine, which he knew they would refuse to drink. When they had refused to break the custom of their

ancestors and drink the wine, Jeremiah used this as a sermon to contrast the fidelity of the Rechabites to the command of their ancestor with the infidelity of Jerusalem to the command and covenant of God. Another day we see him going up and down the streets of Jerusalem with a yoke on his shoulders, the yoke worn by the oxen in the fields, and on Jeremiah's shoulders the sign of Israel's subjugation. And even down in Egypt we see him hiding stones in the brick kiln at Tahpanes, in the sight of the refugees from Israel, as a sign of the conquest of Egypt by Babylon. Whether a spoken or an acted sermon, no one could misunderstand the meaning of his message.

Jeremiah was one of God's grandest prophets and witnesses. When Judas Maccabaeus was struggling for the religious liberty of the Jews and resisting the attempt of Antiochus to force idolatry upon the Hebrews, Jeremiah appeared to Judas and put in his hand a golden sword, saying, "Take this holy sword, a gift from God, with which thou shalt wound the adversaries." This story from The Apocrypha embodies the truth that Jeremiah, execrated, hated, and persecuted in his day and generation, became in later ages a watch cry and a symbol of victory to the people of Israel.

I. *The Courage and Fidelity of Jeremiah.*

Every great soul leaves to mankind a noble heritage. None left a nobler than did Jeremiah. As a servant of God and as a friend of man there are three things that mark and distinguish Jeremiah. The first is his courage. It fell to him during the years of the rise of Babylon as a world power and its increasing aggression on Jerusalem to speak a message of judgment upon the people of God for their sins and apostasies and to declare and predict the conquest of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, and the captivity of the people in Babylon.

This was why Jeremiah was the saddest and loneliest of men. He was a great lover of his city and of his people; yet he was commanded to foretell utter overthrow by Babylon and the captivity as a judgment upon the people for their sins. It is not strange, then, that Jeremiah suffered so much in spirit. Never did a national prophet and leader speak so hard and difficult a message. He felt himself an outcast, and like Job, lamented the day he was born. Yet he never wavered in his loyalty to the Word of God. On one occasion he thought that he would cease to speak as God's prophet, but found that it was impossible. "Then I said I will not make mention of Him nor speak any more in His name; but His word was in my heart, as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and could not stay."

The position of Jeremiah as a prophet and national leader was in striking contrast with that of his great predecessor of a half century earlier, Isaiah. At that time Jerusalem was threatened by Assyria and Nebuchadnezzar, and Isaiah was given the commission to encourage the King Hezekiah in his resistance to the tyrant of Ninevah and to predict the utter overthrow of the armies of Sennacherib. But with Jeremiah it was altogether different. When Babylon was thundering at the gates of Jerusalem he had to proclaim the futility of resistance, of an alliance with Egypt or with any other power, and foretell the ultimate fall and destruction of the city and the captivity of

the people. We get some idea of his situation if we think of a preacher in England today standing in the pulpit of St. Paul's Cathedral and predicting the fall of London, the conquest of England by Germany, and the subjugation of Great Britain to Hitler. It is not strange, then, that the message of Jeremiah stirred up anger, rage and persecution. He was hated, execrated, persecuted, derided, mocked, smitten, and cast into prison as a traitor and as an enemy of his people. Yet in all these perils he was delivered. The promise that God gave him when He called him to the prophet's office, "They shall fight against thee, but they shall not prevail against thee, for I am with thee, saith the Lord, to deliver thee," was gloriously fulfilled.

How grand a thing it was that God could count on him to the last degree, and how grand a thing it is that in every age God has prophets who will speak only the Word of the Lord. These are the men who have made humanity their debtor.

II. *The Compassion and Tenderness of Jeremiah.*

The message of judgment and of woe and captivity was declared to Jerusalem by a man whose heart was tender and whose feelings were stirred within him. Well he could say, "I am the man that hath seen affliction." It was this that made him cry out, "O that I had in the wilderness a lodging place of way-faring men that I might leave my people and go from them." It was this that made him lament, "O that my head were waters and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people." Truly he could say, identifying himself with the fate of Jerusalem, "Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow." Like all great souls, Jeremiah felt the sorrow and tragedy of a nation or a city, or a single soul, frustrating the grace of God and falling short of its destiny. Like every noble soul, he felt the sorrow and tragedy of the triumph of wickedness. As Christ wept over Jerusalem while He pronounced her destruction, so Jeremiah wept over Jerusalem as he spoke the words of her doom. We have not risen to Christ-like standards or proportions until we can feel the sorrow and pathos of a nation departing from God, as our nation is doing today, or of a soul sinning against its Creator and denying its Redeemer, as so many souls are doing today.

III. *Jeremiah's Faith for the Future of the Kingdom of God.*

Shortly before the great prophet of Florence, Savonarola, was burned at the stake, he said, "If you ask me in general as to the issue of this trouble, I reply, Victory. If you ask me in a particular sense, I reply, Death; for the Master who wields the hammer, when he has used it, throws it away. So he did with Jeremiah, whom he caused to be stoned at the end of his ministry. But Rome will not put out this fire; and if this be put out, God will light another."

Likewise Jeremiah, while predicting the coming overthrow and destruction of Jerusalem, strikes the great note of God's restoration, and the kingdom of blessing and glory which will rise out of the ruins of the conquered city. God's purposes with Israel are not ended. He will make a full end of the

nations to which He has driven them, but He will not make a full end of His people.

This faith in the future reaches its climax in his prediction of the New Covenant, the clearest and most spiritual of all the Old Testament prophecies of the Kingdom of Christ. "Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new Covenant with the House of Israel and with the house of Judah. I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord, for they shall all know Me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity and I will remember their sin no more."

Thus the prophet of Doom becomes the prophet of Hope. Jeremiah's sad face is illuminated, lighted, transfigured with the Light of the glory of Christ. All who strive to do God's will in the world must pray that they may have the faith to see and to believe, even in the darkest day, what Jeremiah saw, the glory of the coming of the Lord.

The New Covenant was made by Christ and sealed with His blood. "This cup," He said, on the same night on which He was betrayed, "is the New Covenant in My blood, which is shed for many for the remission of sins." All that God promises to do for His world, all that He promises to do for the salvation of our souls, is upon the ground of that New Covenant that He made with man in Christ. The Covenant stands forever. As God said to Jeremiah, "While stands My covenant with the day and the night, My Covenant with man will stand." By that Covenant we are admitted and restored to the family of God. Would that I had Jeremiah's tenderness, compassion and faith and eloquence, as I now urge upon you to receive from God the blessings of the New Covenant, the forgiveness of sins, the joy of fellowship with Christ and the gift of Eternal Life.

MID-WEEK SERMON

THEME: ***The Place We Give Jesus Christ.***

TEXT: 1 Corinthians 8:6 (see Colossians 1:9-23).

Lincoln, a barefoot, ragged boy in the Kentucky woods: in the last phase the President of the U. S. A. in its greatest crisis. There is always something unbelievable in the great lives. Jesus Christ is more astounding than any we can name. A cattle shed, a carpenter's bench, teaching three years, and dead at thirty-three; no armies, no institutions, called crazy, a heretic; crucified. Two thousand years after men and women in great cathedrals, in lonely chapels, sing his praise, pray to him, preach him. Statesmen see no hope for world except through his way. Multitudes find all their idea of God in him.

The Place They Gave Jesus Christ: "We believe that God so loved the world that he gave his Son to be the Saviour of Mankind. We believe that this very Son of God, for us men and for our salvation, became man in Jesus Christ, who, having lived on earth the perfect human life, devoted

wholly to the will of God and the service of man, died for our sins, rose again from the dead, and is now exalted Lord over all. We believe that Jesus Christ is the Revealer of the Father, and that the mind of God towards the world must in all things be interpreted by the mind of Christ. We believe that when in our experience we are brought face to face with Jesus Christ we are in the presence of the eternal and holy God. Therefore, with the Church of all ages, we worship him together with the Father." Just summary of New Testament statements. Christ was given of God, the great fact of the N. T.

The Place We Give Jesus Christ: Col. 1:18. The world after two thousand years of Christ! Remedy begins with you and me who take the Name on our lips. Whatever is the matter with the Church, is first the matter with Church-people. We must be gripped at the roots of our being by the consciousness that God was in Christ. Listening to strange voices we have lost our grip upon a God who loves and saves and redeems, who enters into men's lives with cleansing, healing, renewing, who makes all things new, even these stained, soiled souls of ours; a God who is revealed in his fulness in Jesus Christ, and in Jesus Christ only.

TOPICS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE'S SOCIETIES

CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR: Y. P.—How Big Is My World? Rom. 1:14. I Cor. 4:7. Gal. 3:28. John 10:16.
Jr.—Job Trusted God in His Suffering. Job 2:1-10.
LUTHER LEAGUE: Sr.—Jesus Said—"Now Listen." Matt. 13:9-17.
Y. P.—Living Daringly. Joshua 1:1-9.
Inter.—Facts About Our Congregation. Acts 2:41-47.
WALTHER LEAGUE: January Topic—Success. 3. Nature of Success. 4. Conditions for Success.

FOR THE BULLETIN BOARD

Night falls unheeded where the Son shines.
Here is a river deeper than we need.
Are you groping like a caterpillar on the end of a twig?
History and faith combine in, "Jesus died."
Doubt closes all roads.
Vitality depends upon activity, physical or spiritual.
The door of opportunity opens in. You must push.
Faith can not be bombed from the air.
You can lift others from the dust, if you will.
It's safer being meek than fierce.
Beginning best it can't end worst.
God is at the organ.

JANUARY, THIRD SUNDAY

CALL TO WORSHIP: "From a babe thou hast known the sacred writings which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Jesus Christ."
PSALM: 47.
PRELUDE: Cathedral Chimes—*Calver.*
ANTHEM: Lord of our Life—*Field.*
OFFERTORY: Dreams—*Stoughton.*
POSTLUDE: Festival March—*Teilman.*
OFFERTORY SENTENCE: "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth, if I remember thee not."
OFFERTORY PRAYER: Accept our gifts and direct us in their use, our Heavenly Father, so we may carry forward Thy work in accordance with Thy plans. Amen.
BENEDICTION: The Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you today and forever. Amen.

SERMONS

THEME: ***Christian Faith and the Present Hour.***

OSCAR F. BLACKWELDER.

TEXT: "Faith is the substance of things hoped for." Hebr. 11:1.
HYMNS: "Who trusts in God, a strong abode."—*Constance,* 8 7, 8 7. *D. Iambic.*
"My Hope is Built on nothing less."—*Melita,* 88, 88, 88.

Dante begins his "Divine Comedy" with these words, "Midway upon the journey of our life, I came to myself in a dark wood, where the right way was lost. Ah, how hard a thing to tell what this wild and rough and difficult wood was, which in thought renews my fear." You and I can share Dante's anxiety in our day for we also face a wood and a world as dark as his. And ours is perhaps more complex. But Dante didn't stop with anxiety and neither can we. This was the theme of the hymns of Paul Gerhardt, who was like a lark singing in the heavens far above the red battlefields of the Thirty Years' War. The glint of the Eternal is in men like Dante and Paul Gerhardt. They dramatize that which is imperishable. They are custodians of those things which will not die. They symbolize "The Contribution of the Christian Faith to the Present Hour."

Let me begin with the observation that each of us may live in three areas or levels of life. There is one's own intimate inner world. And there is the ultimate world of nature and of God. In between the intimate personal world and the ultimate life of God is what we call the stage of history. When this stage of history is so violently upset as at the present time, the task of making personal religion and faith in God practical is exceedingly difficult for many people, but equally imperative. What is the contribution of the Christian faith to the present hour?

First, the Christian Faith must give a permanent background to the passing, tragic drama.

"Oh, where are kings and empires now of old that went and came?" . . . And they still are passing, but they pass in front of the eternal hills. "Social philosophies may wax and wane, civilizations may rise and fall, epochs may come and go because they all share in the frailty of mortal things." It is therefore the mission of the Christian faith to keep before men's minds as vividly as possible the permanent background in front of which the scenes of 1940 pass.

This is not alone the task of the historian. We are related to the past and future as to a stream, but we are also related to that which is beyond history and from that relationship, which transcends all that now happens, we may gain wisdom, light and power by which to interpret, judge and guide the passing scene.

We have been hearing much about economic determinism. We will probably hear more from the better minds about the moral determinism of history. Men and nations are remarkably free to make their decisions and fling their armies, but if history has one lesson to teach, it is that beyond certain limits men and nations cannot go. Men either make or break themselves as they deal with the ultimate facts of the universe. Something more than human exhaustion or the victory of armed might seems to be present at hours of surrender and armistice. Scotland has her Bannockburn; England has her Yorktown; France has her Waterloo; Germany has her Verdun; America has her Gettysburg. It seems to me at those points something structural was reached—and the nature of the structure is moral. It is the permanent background before which the scene passes—the eternal hills beyond which men cannot go—that higher order, however we may conceive of it, in which God reigns beyond man's inhumanity to man and for which He has created us.

You and I watch the turbulent storm of history, bearing all of men's hopes and fears, knowing that these events must and will end. In the meantime the Christian Faith asserts that the providence and purposes of God work out through this world, that there is or can be a relation between the temporal and the eternal. The consciousness of God, working in history, comes not alone from the contemplation of events but by confidence in a central Person, Jesus Christ, Who is in history but beyond it and who makes it possible for us to interpret these events. To see the eternities of God coming into human flesh and life through Jesus Christ is to be aware of that which is permanent behind the passing, tragic drama.

Second, it is the mission of the Christian Faith to provide the way and method by which men may ally themselves with that which is permanent and which towers o'er the wrecks of time.

I have been watching references in recent months to the guidance and power of God as expressed by various national leaders. These modern words seem strangely reminiscent of Abraham Lincoln's classic concern that we should be on God's side. Men yearn for God's alliance. So someone has insisted that "in order to live triumphantly a man must feel that he is allied with that which will endure," with something greater and infinitely more permanent than the recurring squabbles and fights of nations. Men crave fellowship with the Divinity that shapes their ends. To fulfill this universal yearning is the purpose of prayer and worship.

The meaning of prayer is not to influence the purposes of God but to learn those purposes. Christian prayer is built upon the conviction that it is possible for men to share in the purposes of God, that men may know something of what God is doing in the world, for He does not call us servants who merely take orders, but friends who share His creative purposes. Likewise, worship is dedicated to the practical aim not of changing the will of

God, but of co-operating with that will, not of bending the will of God down to us, but of lifting the will of man to God and working together. What a difference such a point of view makes!

The kind of faith in God and man which allies us with the permanent beyond transient darkness is expressed most clearly in the Cross of Christ. You see the Cross says that human tragedy and divine faith belong together. Jesus cried on the Cross, "My God, why hast Thou Forsaken Me"? And that is the cry of mankind today. But Jesus also prayed on that Cross, "Father forgive them" . . . "Father into Thy hands." Alongside the fact of tragedy is the fact of faith. Faith does not mean blind superstition, it does not mean simply believing where you cannot prove. Faith means finding the eternal God through the tragedies of life, it means finding Him intimately in the things that make you uncertain. It means that the more insecure a man feels financially, physically and socially, the more he may become aware of that which economic security cannot provide or the lack of it take away.

Thus the Christian faith, centering in the Cross, is not alone something you hold or do not hold. It is also something—and Someone—that holds you. It unites your life with the eternal and the permanent. Such faith means alliance with the eternal God. It means being added to God. Other relationships may give us breadth—this gives us height and permanence.

What is the contribution of the Christian faith to the present hour? First, it must keep men aware of what is permanent in a shifting civilization. Second, it must provide the way for men to be allied with that which is permanent. *Third, the Christian faith must do for men and women today what nothing else can do.*

This Christian faith is the custodian, the guardian, the liberator of life's imperishable faiths and hopes. Something beyond military fighting is necessary to defend the things men hold dearest. The positive and constructive defense, for example, of our American way of life and of our liberties is ultimately in the hands not of armed might, but of our educational forces and the Christian faith. To illustrate exactly what I mean, the other World War did not make the way safe for democracy even with military victory, because the positive forces at that time failed. Will these constructive forces succeed now? It is my personal conviction that such forces will succeed only as this Christian faith is incarnated in living minds around the world. Clear, calm thinking and high faith must keep the torch of truth and liberty burning.

One of my friends in the Congress said to me last week that in his judgment the greatest tragedy of the hour is that many people will have their viewpoint of life so twisted and gnarled that as long as they live life will look like what it isn't. Who is going to keep alive the true meaning of life which is violated on so many fronts today? There is no social or political philosophy which can answer that question as can the Christian faith. What are these imperishable truths which men dare not forget?

Here's one: The God of our Fathers is our God. His authority lives on. He is able to keep His promise, "Lo, I am with you alway even unto the end of the world." He lives despite the wretched mismanagement of men in

earth's affairs. His wisdom and strength operating through human life are able to transform the misery and loss of the present hour into something permanent. The Christian faith must show men how to pray to and trust Him above anything and everything their human rulers attempt to do or fail to do.

Wide as the world is Thy command,
Vast as eternity Thy love,
Firm as a rock Thy truth must stand,
When rolling years have ceased to move.

Still further, the Christian faith must keep men conscious that in Christ all men are brothers, no matter how impossible that may sound in many ears today. Wild men at the heads of governments who fling youth into bloody cauldrons will be forgotten, but the spirit of Christ is eternal. This spirit enables men to develop courage without malice, which is absolutely imperative for calm, clear thinking. If hate is required to build courage, then the cause itself is questionable. In the words of Douglas Horton, "The call today is for men and women whose souls are great enough to receive the gangrenous streams that are running through the hearts of men, to receive them and never let them issue forth again. To bear the brunt of selfishness, to feel the wash of hysteria, to admit them to our hearts and there to abolish them from life! Strange power of God, that Thou shouldst have given to us the power to administer eternal death to evil." In the midst of a day of hate, may the spirit of Christ in us devour hate.

And the Christian faith is the guardian of our liberties. It has been frequently asserted that America's most distinctive gift to the science of government is the guarantee of religious liberty. Our form of government rests not upon race or economics, but upon character and intelligence. These are spiritual possessions which depend upon the practice of religious liberty for their existence. Therefore, all who trust in God must come to a new consecration of themselves and what they possess, so that the will of God may be enthroned in our national life. We must translate "In God We Trust" from coins to character. So shall our liberties be preserved.

Finally, the Christian faith points to the ancient prayer of Jesus as the hope of the nations: "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." The kingdom of God on earth is the only intelligible way I see for the future of the human race. I wish I had the power both of thought and of expression to make you see and feel deeply this afternoon what Jesus and the kingdom of God could do for our broken and harassed world. Here is the greatest social conception that ever entered human history, by which the nations of the world may conserve their best traditions and cultures, but find a way and a spirit to transcend all that now divides and alienates them. Here is the loyalty strong enough, intelligent enough, moral enough, great enough to overcome racial bitterness, national narrowness and economic jealousies.

For only Christ can set men free
And give them vision new;
Grant us our fairest dreams to see,
O land where dreams come true.

Second Sunday After Epiphany.

THEME: *Do You Care To Live?*

EWART H. WYLE.

SCRIPTURE: Luke 2:41-52.
TEXT: "Jesus answered and said unto him, (Nicodemus), verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." John 3:3.
HYMNS: "May we thy precepts, Lord, fulfil."—*Meribah,* 8 8 8 6. *D.*
"Awake, my Soul, stretch every nerve."—*London New, C. M.*

We are living in chaotic days. Yet the very chaos is a warning and a challenge; a warning of the folly, the futility of men who trust in "things," and a challenge to seek this Christ whose life was and is dedicated to the salvation of man from his own greed. It takes little intelligence to sense the place of the church or of Christians in the present world conflict. Christianity is an essential root of democracy—it is a barrier and foe to autocracy. The startling statement of Jesus, "Ye must be born again," may bring the same confusion to our secular minds as it did to Nicodemus, but it is none the less the clue to life itself. All men are born physically, but only too few know a spiritual rebirth. Even the church has become so busy acting as a sounding board for every new voice that it has sometimes forgotten its fundamental mission of spiritual rebirth. Perhaps your mind is as practical as that of Nicodemus so that you too are asking, "How can these things be?" Let me give you three roads to this spiritual experience so essential to the more abundant life.

I. *A Sense of Personal Responsibility.*

As long as we continue to commit the sin of the impersonal, there will never be much spiritual awakening. As the title of that startling little book suggests, "He Took It Upon Himself," so, if we would follow in the footsteps of the Master, there must come a sense of personal responsibility. One cannot but admire the captain of his ship who stays upon the bridge until the last man is saved. He is responsible for every life entrusted to him—it is his duty and his privilege. Some time ago I was in a discussion group in which the great leaders of the early church were brought to the attention of those present in this question, "What was it that they had that is apparently lacking in us?" I recall the instantaneous answer from someone, "A personal sense of mission." That was what Nicodemus felt in that interview, a challenge to assume a personal responsibility to live and to teach those truths that had attracted him to the Master's place of abode.

It came to Peter after the tragedy of the crucifixion. Three times Jesus asked the question, "Peter, lovest thou me—more than these?" and in response to Peter's answer, the Master spoke of feeding lambs and sheep. The time had come for more than words or good intentions, here was a commission of personal responsibility. Let me ask the question, "And who are the Master's sheep?" Can we not say that every man, woman and child is classified and included in the word "my" before that word "sheep"? Every decadent fragment of humanity, every wandering or lost soul, He claims as his own. I am aware of the nature of sheep. They will follow almost

any leader or any voice into the most absurd places. Their "followship" is for the most part a thoughtless, heedless thing. It was no chance word that the psalmist used, or that Jesus used. It was born of a deep insight into human nature. It was what prompted Isaiah to say, "All we like sheep have gone astray." But when Jesus spoke to Peter, he spoke to us, asking us to assume a more personal responsibility for the winning and cultivating of souls. Do we dare call ourselves members of His Church if we are unwilling to assume this divine command?

II. *A Willingness to Respond.*

By a strange coincidence, the man who seeks to help others, helps himself most. This abundant life is never a thing directly sought or won, it is a by-product. That is the significance of Jesus' words, "He that would find his life, shall lose it, but he that loseth his life for my sake (in the service of his fellows) shall find it."

Do you want to experience a richer life than you know now? There is only one way, "Ye must be born of the water and of the spirit." Human need? you ask. You will find it everywhere. Calling to you everywhere. But beware, no casual philanthropic spirit will suffice. It will demand of you exactly what the Master demanded of Peter on the occasion when they had toiled all night and taken nothing. You will recall the familiar words, "Launch out into the deep!" That's the trouble with so many of our shallow, fruitless lives, we fish too near the shore, we live too near the margin of safety. Of course there are dangers out farther, of course the risk is greater, but it was there that the nets were filled—out farther. The abundant life can only be known to one who is willing to live a little deeper, pray a little deeper, love a little deeper, and share a little deeper.

One evening I rode in a taxi from my hotel to the church. On the way the driver asked me if I were holding a meeting. I replied in the affirmative, and took the occasion to invite him to come sometime. He told me that his hours would not permit it, but that he surely would like to come. As we arrived at the church he looked at me and with a hesitant voice said, "Preacher, would you do something for me?" "Of course I will," I replied, "if I can." Then came his request. "Preacher, when you're in there tonight with all those good folks—would you think of me a little—driving this cab around the city—and—would you say a little prayer for me?" "Why," I told him, "We don't need to wait for the service, let's have a prayer right here in the cab." And we did, and I believe that prayer did me more good than it did him, for it awakened in me a knowledge that in all of our cities, there are men cruising up and down our streets in their cabs, many of them hungry for a word of prayer, a word of encouragement, or even a Christian handclasp. If this is true of a cab driver, is it not true of a thousand and one callings in life?

III. *Discipline.*

Out of the shadows of that evening meeting so many years ago, would it be hard to imagine Jesus telling Nicodemus that if he would be born again he must discipline his life? Perhaps it sounded like, "If any man would

come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me."

But, are you one who is convinced that commitment to the Savior means sorrow, heartbreak and sadness? Then you do not really understand the meaning of discipline. I was living in Canada. Many of our local boys had enlisted in the 164th battalion, and the principal of the local high school had become the lieutenant of the local platoon. Word reached our little town one day that the whole battalion was marching across Ontario in an emergency effort to train the men for service in Flanders' fields. Needless to say, the day the boys were to arrive in our city was a general holiday. Everyone who could went out to meet the marching soldier boys. All day they had been on a forced march with a full load—knapsack, rifle, bedding and other equipment packed somewhere on their persons. But, they seemed happy, radiantly so. Next day we saw them as they broke camp and marched on their way. As they went they sang, their feet marching in unison with the strains of the band. They were learning discipline. In every heart there was the belief that they were fighting for the homes and loved ones left behind, that they were upholding the ideals of king and country that were more precious to them than life itself. Hence the radiance in the midst of sacrifice. It is the keynote of all real greatness. It explains the Cross of Calvary, and the trail of victory of the Master's followers.

What a lesson for us in such an hour as this! In the very contrasts of the moment—the freedom of this great land in worship and in the commonplaces of living, so different from those lands across the sea where God and his Church have interfered with the dictatorial ambitions of greedy men—we must hear God's call to arms. Through the centuries God has called through the voices of his prophets, so today, every voice and every loyal follower is needed in the crusade for love and peace. The discipline of love and faith in God is challenging us to a commitment of our lives as we have never known it before.

And, strange to say, it is this very discipline that makes us free. We were reminded by E. Stanley Jones, in Denver, of this great truth. The criminal in the prison finds his freedom gone. He has failed to learn the lesson of discipline, that there is no short-cut to life's greatest experiences.

I have heard Fritz Kreisler play, not upon a violin alone, but upon human heart-strings. I have heard Lawrence Tibbett thrill his audiences with the magic of his voice. Do you think skill like that just happens? Let me remind you that in the background there are hours and days and weeks of disciplined practice, until the very discipline gave them the joyous freedom of rich skill.

This was Jesus' message to Nicodemus. Through him He speaks to us, "Ye must be born again" if you would have a part in the Kingdom of God.

Do you care to live? Not the mere existence of the beast of the field, or of the fowl of the air, but the joyous experience of a Son of the Living God? Then you, too, must come seeking Jesus with a hungry heart. He will answer you, He will lift you, He will reclaim and forgive you, He will bless you—and through you, others. His is not the power of kings or captains, it is the power of divine love, the only power that can save you—and save a stricken world.

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, by whose grace we live, we who walk in a dim path through clouded and uncertain days, pray Thee for light, lest we wander still farther from Thy guiding faith and love.

Grant us forgiveness for the transgressions of yesterday and today, and fill our hearts with true repentance, so that a new life may come forth upon the foundation of Thy love and Thy will.

Help us to live with an unfailing trust in Thy love and goodness, and when Thou art through with us here, take us to Thyself in heaven. Amen.

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

The Slighted Invitation.

LESSON: Luke 14:15-35. Print Luke 14:15-24.
GOLDEN TEXT: "Come; for all things are now ready." Luke 14:17.
DEVOTIONAL READING: Isaiah 55:1-7.
INTER. & SR. TOPIC: The Excuses We Make.
Y. P. & ADULTS: Our Response to Christ's Invitation.

This lesson was probably in January 30 A.D. same time as our last lesson. The place was in Perea in a Pharisee's house. Those invited had originally signified their intention of coming. Their final refusal to attend the feast was a most flagrant breach of etiquette and an unpardonably discourteous thing. The parable was spoken directly to the Jews to set before them their opportunities and the danger of rejecting them to their infinite loss. Study Jewish history in reference to this parable, especially the great blessings to which God had invited them. Note the various times and ways in which they rejected God's invitation. See Matthew 23:37-39. Note the ways in which the invitation which the Jews rejected was received by the classes they despised, the Gentiles.

Jesus was still at the table. One of the guests, elevated in feeling, exclaimed, "Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the Kingdom of God." This expressed in an Oriental way the idea of being members of the kingdom and sharing in all its benefits. The remark gave Jesus a natural opportunity for teaching practical and pointed truths.

1. The Kingdom of God is like a great supper. The Gospel feast provides in abundance. There is enough for each, enough for all. The teacher should read Trench's poem, "The Monk and the Bird."

The holy men of old, the Scriptures, Jesus Christ Himself, the Apostles, Christians of all ages past have been preparing the Gospel feast for us. The announcement has been made. We have been trained under Christian influences. The invitation is as wide as humanity, as lofty as the love of God, as ample as the wants of men. For each of us all things are now ready, and we are urged to come.

Notice that the first excuse hinged around *possessions*. The second excuse had to do with *business*. The third excuse centered on *pleasure*. The delights of home, the pleasures of appetite, the fascinations of society still

lead men to make excuse for neglecting religion. Notice that the excuses were founded on the wrong emphasis on right things. Reasons and excuses are entirely different things. Men are frequently ashamed for their real reason for their conduct and seek to hide them from others and also from themselves by some plausible excuse.

The invitation was not continually pressed. The host turned to others. The day of opportunity was gone and those who had been *first* found themselves *last.*

We are to go into the highways and hedges and compel them to come in by the exercise of love and entreaty, by persistent untiring effort, by the attractions of the feast which is offered, by the goodness of Him who gives it. The invitation is extended to *all,* even the most unpromising. The worse men are, the more degraded and sinful, the fewer their opportunities, the more opposed to good, so much the more do they need the invitation of the Gospel.

EVENING SERMON

THEME: *Olympic Games of the Soul.*

J. C. MASSEE, D. D.

TEXT: "Do you not know that in a foot race, while the runners all run, only one gets the prize."—*Weymouth,* I Cor. 9:24.

HYMNS: "Awake, My Soul, stretch every nerve."—*London New, C. M.*
"Jesus, Still lead on."—*Seelenbrautigam,* 55, 88, 55.

Paul writes to the Christians of Corinth, the rich, luxurious, worldly city of Greece. And he writes in the atmosphere of Greece, where the public mind was constantly saturated with the Olympic atmosphere and interests, for those Olympic games were a great national religious festival, flavored with the intensest racial and patriotic fervor.

Paul, a past master at making capital of all circumstances, fits his illustration into the thought-pattern of those to whom he writes. He simply uses the constant personal and public interest to illustrate the gospel incentive and to provide a lever to lift them into the challenge of Christian life.

The Holy Spirit makes capital of this in the character Paul gives himself as a runner in the foot race. He uses this illustration of what it means to be the right kind of Christian, in the expectation of arousing the interest and engaging the allegiance of youth. The Bible is the Book of youth. The gospel is the challenging call of youth, to the adventure and enterprise of personal investment, as represented by athletic contests, all those forms of exercise in sport in which the contestant must first enroll himself, then discipline himself, and then invest himself. Here success depends upon personal qualities, enlisted, disciplined and employed.

The Olympic Games.

There are three essential factors in the Olympic Foot Race.

1. The prize to be won, a fading chaplet.
2. The Goal, must be attained, or no crown; "So run that you may attain."
3. The Race itself. Discipline, "in training" self mastery, "temperate in all things," "Exercise thyself into Godliness."

The Spiritual Analogies.

1. Life is a race. It is run in relays. They who receive must commit. Passion means passing on, so Paul to Timothy (2 Tim. 2:1-2), "Thou therefore, my child, be strengthened in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things which thou hast heard from me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also."

Solomon's philosophy of materialism can result only in fatalistic pessimism. To him, as expressed in Ecclesiastes, life is just a "ring around rosy," unending monotony of fruitless effort of foolish investment. "All is vanity and a striving after wind." No use to try, The crooked cannot be made straight. That which is wanting cannot be supplied." It is no wonder that his conclusion is "So I hated life." Life has no incentive to him to justify the racer's effort.

In complete and inspiring contrast, to all this, is Paul's exhortation in Hebrews 12:1f. The galaxy of faith's heroes and heroines presents itself to his vivid imagination as "a cloud of witnesses" who look on the Christian athlete with cheers and exhortations. These qualities of enterprise and achievement appeal preeminently and powerfully to all normal youth. It was not Paul's method, certainly it was not the method of the Lord Jesus to present the gospel appeal with everlasting yammering about sin. Hear Him. "I came that you might have life, and have it more abundantly."

There had been the usual number and character of so-called testimonies of being "Saved and Kept," more or less meaningless, and without power to stir or move any one Godward. Then a young lady came to her feet, as if she moved on springs, and with glowing face, and vibrant voice said exultantly, "I am having the time of my life being a Christian!" Nothing conventional, nor according to pattern there. She was alive, and the ferment of "The life more abundant" was effervescent in her veins. She was alive! And she made others want to share her life, to drink at the fountain from which she drank, and to eat at the table from which her bounty came; to have the glorious fun she was having. There was an experience that embraced the home and its family, the class room and its lessons; the campus and its games, the prom and its sports and friends. And if disappointments or sorrows came, then there was courage and strength to carry on. You felt at once that, to borrow the expressive language of her crowd, she could "take it as well as give it."

Now there are three essentials of this most heavenly foot race revealed in its analogies.

The Heavenly Prize.

There is a heavenly prize: Paul wrote to his young friend Timothy an exhortation to "lay hold of life eternal." I Tim. 6:12. But that command is a jewel, set between two royal mountings. On one side of it is, "Fight the good fight of the faith." More than a golden text. On the other, "Where unto thou wast called and didst confess the good confession in the sight of many witnesses." There was the call from God, the response from youth and the public committal to a worthy life, with the prize of the high calling of God in Christ always before him as a goal.

The gospel message never wearies of holding out that incentive to men.

The imagery of Phil. 3:12, is in perfect keeping with the spirit of the gospel, and provides the stimulus of a great spiritual inspiration to enlistment in the race for eternal life. Paul has glimpsed the resurrection life. He yearns to obtain it, this experience of the eternal. And so he enters the race and, "I press on, if so be I may lay hold on that for which I was laid hold on by Christ Jesus . . . forgetting the things which are behind . . . I press on toward the goal, unto the prize of the high calling in Christ Jesus." That is the language of the athlete, the runner and the track.

Those who run in the marathon on Mt. Olympus, do it to obtain a fading chaplet. But we run to obtain an unfading crown, unfading and incorruptible. Indeed the adjectives used by Paul to describe this prize in addition to the unfading, and incorruptible, add luster to its possession, they are "a crown of rejoicing" (I Thess. 2:19), "A crown of righteousness" (II Thess. 4:8); to these James adds "A crown of life" (James 1:12); and John "A crown of victory" (Rev. 3:12), and Peter "An unfading crown of glory."

Ah, to be crowned in heaven, and with such a crown, in the sight of all the saints. Spectacle of spectacles!

The Goal—The Victory.

But this crown, conferred as it is by free and sovereign grace, must yet be won. Heavenly Paradox! Given yet won!

Paul sought to win his prize by winning men to allegiance to Christ. "I am become all things to all men, that I may by all means save some," v. 22, and again, "I do all things for the gospel sake, that I may be a joint partaker thereof," v. 23. Then follows the athletic exhortation. Surely there is no more exacting test of steadfastness and stamina than this disciplining of self to win others. He writes to Timothy that he had won his crown of righteousness, by keeping the faith to the end of the course, and by the good fight on many a battle field. He had found out that it was within his power, to make good the claim: Sin shall not have dominion over me. James indicates the same conditions for the winning of this heavenly prize, for it is promised to those who endure.

So keep your eye on the goal and run! Atalanta and the golden apples legend of mythology, well illustrate the wiles of the devil, whose devices are many and varied, all to one purpose to keep us from the goal and the prize. Paul weeps over the Galatians, "You did run well, who hindered you, that you should not obey the truth? Oh foolish Galatians who did bewitch you, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was openly set forth crucified? For freedom did Christ set you free; Stand fast therefore and be not entangled again in a yoke of bondage."

The Race.

The prize—The goal—The race: Let it not be thought that this is a reversal of sequence. No, for before the choice to make the race, the prize which may be had at the goal must be known, and the conditions of its obtaining. So now we must consider *The Race:*

The race must be entered. No race no goal, no goal no prize! There is no

way to win the crown of life offered in the gospel message, unless you enter the race by accepting and confessing the Lord Jesus Christ. This thing must be done and done openly.

Following enrollment among the contestants, there is perpetual discipline. Never a let up! The Baptist Marathon runner from Revere, Mass., Clarence DeMars, was known to run miles, back and forth to his work daily, all the year around. Then and thus only, was he fitted to win five 25 mile marathons, unprecedented reward for unequalled rigid discipline and training!

Training must take account of three things.

The Ability to Run.

There must be character, an inherent quality, God's investment by natural endowment. The Grace of God is not designed to lift personality out of the scope of its endowments in life. But it does undertake the enrichment of personality within its scope or class.

The communication of grace to a non-mathematical mind is not designed to make a mathematical genius. One who has no musical genius at all, will not be made a musician by grace, though he will probably find an urge to make a joyful noise to the Lord for all his days. The runner must have some fleetness of limbs, some rhythm in movement, some facility of motion. Then this ability to run can and will be enriched by grace. But ability must be developed. The Christian athlete must "train himself for godliness." Weak places in character must be strengthened. Enduring qualities must be recognized, and limitations taken into account.

The roll of martyrs in Hebrews, chapter eleven, lists the names of timid women as well as of men bold as lions. But they all had in them the quality of faith keeping, of loyalty, devotion to duty, and a full ability to see Him who is invisible, and to put Soul Values before all material things.

There Must Be Stamina.

Perhaps the one quality most needed in the runner for God is stamina. Paul writes to Timothy, "Endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ."

It is reported that once Lincoln in the early days of his struggle with Judge Douglas, for the Presidency, making the abolition of slavery his major issue, said to his friend, "Billy, this is to be an enduring struggle." No mere battle this, but war, relentless war, to the end.

It is even so with every contestant for the heavenly prize, awaiting him, behind the goal of the good fight of faith.

In the aluminum factory I saw two tests, of the enduring quality of the material being manufactured. One a test for the endurance of shock, 2500 tons weight, dropped from a height upon the metal. The other a test for length of enduring or lasting quality under steady pressure, one rod had supported the appointed weight, untouched for eleven years. The Christian needs both the quality of soul that guarantees the power to endure both sudden shock and lasting burdens.

The pastor will need that stamina. The witness under cross examination will need it. The missionary whose service seems fruitless will need with unstaggered faith, to say after seven years of waiting upon the faithfulness of God; "The prospects are as bright as the promises of God."

There must be found for him who would win the heavenly prize, a moral stamina which draws upon hidden resources when the power to endure has been exhausted.

Galileo, wracked in the inquisition, until physical strength could endure no more, and forced to recant; his teaching that the earth moved around the sun, will find within himself some where, the strength to say through clenched teeth, "But it does more for all that." At Verdun, in the World War, the French Soldiers, held in filthy trenches amid the constant rain of death-dealing missiles hurled by resolute and implacable foes, found that enduring quality, that enabled them to make good their, "They shall not pass."

Of the Battlefield of Waterloo and its issue, Boedeker's guide remarks, that Napoleon and his marshals "took account of everything but one, namely, that the English Soldier has a habit of standing."

So soldiers of Christ, runners whose faces are set to the goal of the cross and the crown, will need to endure scars in the making, and to realize that in the crowning day these very scars will be marks of distinction. So Christ bore the wounds of many. He was more marred than any man. When men beheld him there was no beauty in him that they should desire him. But he despised the shame, and endured the cross, till his chosen way led him to a seat at the right hand of the Majesty on high.

Thus following Him, Paul sets himself against all allurements of friend and opposition of foe. Simply saying: Let no man trouble me, I bear branded in my body the marks of Jesus. And thus *all* the galaxy of the saints.

Now let us in the presence of this great cloud of witnesses, lay aside, every weight, and the sin that so closely besets us, and run with steadfastness the race set before us, ever looking to Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, for inspiration and enabling.

We can never rest till we win the crown! Amen.

MID-WEEK SERMON

THEME: ***The Active Spirit of God.***

TEXT: Acts 19:2.

Opening of tomb of Tut-ankh-amen gave us knowledge of many things of Egypt three thousand years ago. We know one of his ancestors discredited polytheism and taught but one God. Tut put the clock back and led in worship of many gods. We know of a man Moses who believed passionately in one God and so taught. History has marched with Moses.

The One God Manifested: Today a man has either to worship one God or none at all. The people of the Book brought that dynamic belief out of the shadows of time. The greatest thing that ever happened, absolutely the greatest, was the faith that became credible and powerful that a Man lived, making clear what a man ought to be. Centuries of revelation centered in him, and for twenty more centuries minds of believing men have focussed on Christ seeing in him the expression of God.

The Active Spirit of God: You and I live in the third phase of the manifestation of God. These are the days of the Holy Spirit. John 14:16. "We believe that God through his Spirit is ever present in the lives of men, seeking them for himself, rebuking their sinfulness, inspiring every right desire, and every effort after truth. We believe that all who seek God through Jesus Christ may in the Spirit have communion with him by obedience, by prayer, and by the fellowship and Sacraments of the Church; and that by the same Spirit power is granted to all who ask it, giving them victory over sin, and transforming them into the likeness of Christ."

Life In The Spirit: The demonstration of the past decade is that we have more mechanical power than we can properly control and direct. What we need, and need badly, is the power of the Spirit to control and direct ourselves first. The permanent claim of the N. T. is that in Christ Jesus this power is made available to us. The secret of power lies in communion with God, and the steps to power are obedience, prayer, fellowship. Galatians 2:20.

TOPICS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE'S SOCIETIES

CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR: Y. P.—How Can God Become Real to Me? John 4:23-34. I Cor. 2:9-10. John 14:7-10.
Jr.—Paul Trusted God in Trouble. Acts 27:15-25.
LUTHER LEAGUE: Sr.—The Girl Friend—The Boy Friend. Hebr. 13:4-5.
Y. P.—Living Epistles. II Cor. 3:2-3.
Inter.—Ways to Help the Congregation. Acts 2:41-47.
WALTHER LEAGUE: January Topic—Success. 5. Results of Success. 6. Rareness of Great Success.

FOR THE BULLETIN BOARD

Even your neighbor prefers the pure in heart.
God never failed to bless a genuine smile.
There is no room in true religion for the long face.
It is yours to make it a golden highway or a lonely mile.
The same winds blow on all.
Take time to rest a while.
Have you asked, where lies the way?
Divine power is for you who would use it.
Strength lies in exercise, not idleness.
That which costs the least is always worth it.
"Do now what thou wouldest do then."
The goalposts are never set up in center field.
He is fast who can leave himself behind.

JANUARY, FOURTH SUNDAY

CALL TO WORSHIP: "It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord and to sing praises unto Thy name, O Most High, to show forth Thy loving kindness in the morning and Thy faithfulness every night." Psa. 92.

PSALM: 61.

PRELUDE: Solace—*Pease.*

ANTHEM: Awake, Awake—*Smallwood.*

OFFERTORY: Offering in G—*Becker.*

POSTLUDE: Caprice—*Sturges.*

OFFERTORY SENTENCE: "But whoso keepeth His word, in him verily hath the love of God been perfected. Hereby we know that we are in Him, he that saith he abideth in Him ought himself also to walk even as He walked."

OFFERTORY PRAYER: We thank Thee, Almighty God, for the privilege of worship to Thee, for the period in which we may forget our temporal needs and allow our hearts and minds to dwell upon Thee and Thy Kingdom. Accept this gift of our love in Christ's name. Amen.—W.

BENEDICTION: And now may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

SERMONS

THEME: The Strong Life.

TEUNIS E. GOUWENS, D. D.

TEXT: "The Lord is the strength of my life." Psalm 27:1.

HYMNS: "My Spirit on Thy Care."—*St. Michael, S. M.*
"Lord to Whom except to Thee."—*St. Bees,* 7 7, 7 7.

The Psalmist had made the supreme discovery of life. He had found that the source of his strength was the Lord. Experience had taught him that so long as he attempted to stand in his own might he was a weakling. It was religion alone that could release the reservoir of power for want of which his soul fainted.

Why is it, do you suppose, that this Psalm has stood the test of the ages and lives today as one of the favorites of mankind? It is because everyone feels at home in it. The experience it describes is a genuinely human experience. In one way or another the world convinces us of our infirmities and at last we discover, to our unspeakable relief and encouragement, that the Lord *is* the strength of our life.

I need not stress at length the fact that the sense of weakness is universal. Every human heart at times is conscious of its frailty. Often you have secretly and reluctantly confessed your incompetence. Before the world you wore the mask of courage and mastery, but in the depths of your own soul you knew that you were all but undone. All the people with whom you hold your daily intercourse have similar seasons of misgiving. There is in the inner chambers of men's hearts a fear of defeat which makes us all brothers.

There are many and various situations in life which reveal to us our weakness. Sometimes our need is impressed upon us by bereavement. Sometimes our insufficiency is brought home to us by the readiness with which we yield to temptation. Sometimes we are compelled to admit our helplessness when a crisis catches us unaware. Sometimes the long strain of

daily work exhausts our reserve and leaves us weak in body, mind and spirit. In one way or another, life reminds us of the limitations of our strength.

And in our defeat we are very unhappy. No one delights in being a weakling. It is natural for the human heart to covet power. Strength is an ideal to which we all aspire. We want strong bodies, strong minds and strong characters. A thrill of joy accompanies a masterly achievement. When we speak of a strong life we speak of something which every person would be proud to possess.

We address ourselves to a question of universal interest, therefore, when we ask, "What are the sources of our strength?" How can we fortify our lives for the successful encounter of the problems, the trials, the temptations and the tasks which are sure to confront us? How can we prepare ourselves for the emergencies which inevitably arise?

We must begin by knowing ourselves. We are not likely to develop into victors unless we know what material for victorious life is at our disposal. No two of us are alike. We have been variously endowed. A situation through which one man passes unscathed will ruin another. A task which cows one man is easily performed by his neighbor. Our lives are in constant peril so long as we are unaware of our own virtues and faults. It may hurt us to acknowledge our weakness, but until we do we cannot progress very far on the road that leads to power. The only achievement we can hope for must be won by ourselves as we are, not as we wish we were and not as we wish other people to think we are. The only successful way for us to go through life is to go through it in our own individual manner, developing and using, according to our own genius, the talents God has given us. A man may be an excellent teacher of mathematics and yet be utterly unable to qualify as a banker. His forte is instruction, not business. We always rise higher by being natural than by assuming the role of another whom we admire.

It is evident, therefore, that the first essential for a strong life is an *intimate knowledge of ourselves.*

The second essential for a strong life is a *clear conscience.* The man who harbors in his bosom an unclean thought or a dishonest purpose undermines his stability and effectiveness. No man can defy the authority of the still small voice and emerge from the struggle of life a conqueror. There are few things which can so arouse a sense of insecurity as the conviction that the course we are pursuing is wrong. On the other hand, one of the most invigorating and sustaining things in human experience is the certainty that the cause for which we stand is right. It is an exhilarating thing to be able to say with Sir Galahad, "My strength is as the strength of ten, because my heart is pure."

Another essential for a strong life is *harmony.* A machine operates at its maximum power only when all its parts are properly balanced. An organization is most effective when all its members are actuated by a common spirit. Likewise the life of man is strong not when his soul is torn by strife but rather when he lives in peace. This concord is achieved by the entertainment of an ideal to which the whole man aspires. Many failures are due to an inner conflict of emotions and desires. We are constituted of many selves. There is a lower self which delights in sensual indulgence; there is a higher self which delights in spiritual development. There is the self of childhood,

the self of youth and the self of maturity. There is the proud self and the humble self. In every human life there is a medley of instincts, impulses, sentiments and desires. If these are at war with one another, the result is a mutual repression and a consequent loss of power. It is only as this chaos is transformed into order by some worthy principle that life can become strong. And the only force that can satisfactorily organize the self and bring its impulses into harmony is the inspiration of an ideal which stands approved in the light of our highest standards.

Again, our strength is conditioned on *confidence.* The man who mistrusts his power to succeed is handicapped from the start with a partial paralysis. Doubt is a deadening deterrent, but we have the Master's own assurance that nothing can block the advance of faith. A firm belief in one's ability to win is an almost irresistible thing. Opposition crumbles before the radiant certainty that is born of trust. Faith has "Subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword," and performed all manner of stupendous feats which to the eyes of the timid seemed impossible.

A further essential for a strong life is *companionship.* It helps us enormously to be surrounded by those who care for us. We draw a very real support from the knowledge that others share our desires and want us to succeed. Here is one of the unanswerable arguments for Christian fellowship in the church. Loneliness is enervating, but we are braced by the love and sympathy of our friends. The inspiration of companionship is due partly to our conscious or unconscious desire for applause, partly to its impartation of courage, and largely to the fact that we are social beings who were meant to live and work together. So necessary is this companionship that faith often forbids even death to interrupt it. Dr. S. Parkes Cadman told of Bishop Randolph S. Foster that for thirty years he walked a lonely road because his wife had died. But on Sunday nights, when the sun was low, he used to sit down and talk with his wife as though she were present with him in the room. "Mary," he would say, "I have found it a little hard to preach today, but I felt your presence with me and you gave me strength." Those of you who in years past were sustained by the presence of a loved one, since departed, know how true it is that the strength afforded by that precious companionship is still available.

But the chief source of **our power is God.** The Psalmist summed up the whole matter when he said, "The Lord is the strength of my life." For, all these things that I have mentioned, a knowledge of ourselves, a clear conscience, an inner harmony, an attitude of confidence and an enjoyment of companionship, are dependent for their complete realization on our faith in God. They make their full contribution to the strong life only as they are brought into conscious relationship with the Lord of the universe. That man knows himself best who measures himself most candidly by the standard of perfect manhood revealed in Jesus. That conscience is most trustworthy which is instructed by the Light of the World. That life is most harmonious which is wholly dedicated to the moral ideal as it is in Christ. That faith is most irresistible which has as its object not a man himself but the eternal God whose promises are backed by omnipotence. And that companionship

is most satisfying which extends beyond the confines of human life and includes our Father in heaven.

We are the handiwork of God. We are so made that we need certain things. And most of the things we need lie outside of our own lives. We need food, clothing and shelter. We need instruction concerning the world in which we live. Life was a very poor thing to Helen Keller until, through the sense of touch, avenues were opened by which the outside world could enter her soul. Many of the things we need we can win by our own initiative and progress. But many other things, and among them the most important, lie beyond our own power of attainment. They are the gifts of God. He has endowed us with capacities which can never be filled without the appropriation of these gifts. J. Brierley speaks of religion as "representing the whole upper range of powers that are incessantly shaping our race to finer issues." To reject that upper range of power is to consign our souls to ultimate defeat.

The word "strong" is akin to the word "string," and a string is composed of a number of threads or strands twisted together. To say, therefore, that "The Lord is the strength of my life," is to say that my life is interwoven with the life of God. This is the way it should be. To separate from the cord which represents omnipotence the slender strand which represents my life is to make of myself a thing of pitiable weakness.

When a man has learned that the Lord is his strength he has made the supreme discovery of his life. Bishop Westcott, on his deathbed, was heard repeating the hundred and third Psalm, "Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name." And Brierley aptly remarks, "It says something after all for a philosophy of life which enables a man, at the very end, to sum up his experience in those words of rapturous joy and of adoring gratitude."

There is an endless variety of testimony to this same fundamental experience. Haydn, the musician, when asked how he regained his inner strength after a period of hard work, replied, "In my home I have a small chapel. When I feel wearied because of my work, I go there and pray. This remedy has never failed me."

Many questions have been raised about Christianity. But the one question that really matters is this, "Has it power?" Can it transform life? Can it make a bad man good? Can it make a weak man strong? Can it fortify a man in time of temptation, in time of misfortune, in time of sorrow? If it can, its genuineness is established. And the unanimous testimony of those who have tried it is that it is such a power. It is God's answer to the need which he himself has planted in the human bosom. Man is incomplete without Christ. He is a weakling till he can say, "The Lord is the strength of my life." Can you say it, my friend? If not, why not? Does your timidity or your pride or your selfishness restrain you? Be assured that you defeat yourself when you reject the resources which God has made available for you in Christ. I plead with you to cast all reserve to the winds this morning and to dedicate your soul to the Lord. "Wait on the Lord: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the Lord."

Third Sunday After Epiphany.

THEME: ***Habitual Christianity.***

DR. FRANK E. WILSON, BISHOP OF EAU CLAIRE.

TEXT: "And He shall set the sheep on His right hand and the goats on His left." Matt. 25:33.

HYMNS: "Blest are the Pure in Heart."—*Franconia, S. M.*
"My Faith looks up to Thee."—*Faith,* 6 6 4, 6 6 6 4.

It is the well-known picture of the Last Judgment. Our Lord is telling of that great day when all people shall appear before Him and He shall pass judgment on their lives.

The significant point about this passage is not that our Lord forecasts a judgment for all mankind but the basis upon which that judgment is to be rendered. Christ spoke to the people in terms to which they were already accustomed. He took the idea which was quite familiar to them all, that each man's life would finally be subject to some sort of inspection and that the unknown future had a direct connection with the known present. Along with this He took much of the symbolical language which was current in His own day and cast it about His teaching.

The Saviour welcomes those on the right hand, saying to them—"I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink." But they are surprised at such commendation. They are at a loss to recognize themselves. "Lord," they say, "when did we do all these things?" And He replies, "that is just the point; you were always ready to do such things as these and for that very reason you scarcely realized the good you were doing; inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." Then to the unprofitable ones He says, "I was an hungered and ye gave me no meat; I was thirsty and ye gave me no drink." And they begin to protest, saying, "how can this be? Surely if we had ever met Thee, we would have spared no pains to do our full duty." Our Lord replied, yes, even the worst of men do commendable things under pressure; but that sort of righteousness is of doubtful value in making out of them really better men. "Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not unto Me."

You see what our Lord is getting at. Those who are commended had moulded their lives along dependable Christian lines, not by occasional, unrelated acts of goodness but by the steady application of Christian habits. And the net result is not a series of shining deeds but a soundly constructed Christian character which is ready for and capable of a persistent production of Christian deeds at any time.

Have you ever noticed that the really good people are the ones who take the least credit to themselves? There is no mock humility about it. These people do not plan out a kindness here and another one there, over which they may smack their lips in healthy righteousness. They simply do not think about it. They have acquired Christian habits and all of this is perfectly natural to them. They will be embarrassed by compliments and will probably tell you that they do such things only because they like to do them. But the ones who always demand recognition—how tiresome they are! Being

so extremely conscious of every good deed they do, they are making each good deed to be an end in itself instead of making goodness a quality of character. But Christ tells us, it is the latter by which men stand or fall in the sight of God.

This is His standard and we need it today—not so much Christian deeds as Christian habits. Bring on a war and you can arouse a whole nation of people to the very pinnacle of self-sacrifice. They will economize, deny themselves, dedicate their lives in a brilliant glow of patriotic enthusiasm. Certainly there is something very fine about it. But self-sacrifice is an essential quality of the Christian Gospel. It is not meant to come in violently stimulated outbursts. It is meant to be so habitual that Christians will live by it day in and day out—war or no war. Careful observers have sometimes remarked that many of our popular American stories, both written and dramatized, make a serious error in extolling the common virtues. For example, here is some young man who becomes involved in a net of bewildering circumstances which is rapidly turning him into a thieving rogue. All at once he takes hold of himself, faces about, and determines henceforth to be honest in spite of everything. Whereupon we are supposed to applaud him vigorously and accept him as a great hero. But why? Surely he is doing only what ought to have been done from the beginning. Plain honesty is not an extraordinary achievement—it ought to be an undebatable habit. Here is another man who finds an article belonging to some one else and after suffering the throes of covetousness he valiantly returns the article to its owner, receiving a substantial reward, while we, the public, wax eloquent over the virtuous outcome. But isn't that something which should be taken for granted irrespective of any possible reward? Some one bravely steps forward and tells the truth at considerable cost to himself and again we are expected to make a fuss about it. But why should we? Of course people ought to tell the truth. We are making unusual events out of things which should be everyday habits. We are investing simple virtues with abnormal significance.

A physician was once called as a witness to give his testimony in a small country town in connection with a case which was being prosecuted by an imported attorney from a neighboring city. Under cross-examination the attorney proceeded to tangle up the witness in some of his statements of fact. "On the night in question," said the lawyer, "you have testified that you visited the home of the defendant and had some conversation with him. Now, please tell the jury what was said." "I know I was there," the physician replied, "but I have no recollection of what was said by either one of us." "Is it not true," the lawyer persisted, "that during the conversation you said so-and-so?" "No," answered the physician, "I never said any such thing." "Well," sneered the lawyer, "this is very strange testimony. One moment you swear that you remember nothing that was said and the next moment you remember very clearly that you did not say what I have just repeated. How do you account for such inconsistency?" "Very easily," replied the physician. "I have lived a great many years in this community and it is well known that I have always found it convenient to tell the truth. I do not recall what may have passed in that conversation but I know I did not say what you have stated for the simple reason that it is not true."

Do you see? We can never be satisfied with deeds of honesty, deeds of purity, deeds of truthfulness. We must have habits. Isolated acts are not enough. A steady flow of character is required.

Now habits are the outgrowth of repetition in small things. You don't learn how to write by inscribing some highly important document, making your will or signing a check. You learn hand-writing by very simple copy-book exercises, begun with difficulty but repeated over and over again until the forming of letters becomes an acquired habit. Neither do you learn to be a musician by rendering complicated numbers at two or three public concerts. You begin with finger exercises over which you labor diligently through days and years of monotonous practice. So you acquire the habit of technique. You reach the point where you think about what you are playing and not about the action of your hands.

In a similar way you do not learn to be a Christian by doing occasional Christian deeds. Your Christian life depends upon the development of Christian habits—and Christian habits are the outgrowth of repetition in small things. The Church is speaking out of a long and practical experience when she calls you to repeated observance of the great feast days—Christmas, Easter, Ascension Day, when she provides you with at least weekly opportunities for public worship, when she urges you to regular prayer and a continuous program of service to Christ. Sometimes these may seem to you rather trivial, relatively unimportant compared to the large needs of the world which we discuss at imposing mass meetings. But it is the way to make habits and habits are never unimportant.

A college professor was once demonstrating in a physics laboratory the cumulative effect of the repeated impacts of a small mass upon a much larger one. He had a heavy bar of iron hanging over his desk and beside it an ordinary cork suspended on a cord. He proceeded to swing the cork against the iron bar while the class smiled as the cork bounced back without any appreciable result. Over and over again the tiny blow was repeated, striking always in the same place. At last the iron bar quivered, moved, and eventually swayed with an even, rhythmic swing.

So do these apparently unimportant Christian habits of ours eventually sway our lives and swing them Godwards. That is why we count it of such primary importance that our children should be trained in regular Christian duties. We want them to play the part of a Christian instinctively—not by conscious effort. Thus it is that we build Christian tradition so that no individual stands alone in his service to Christ but he is always buoyed up with the strengthening support of Christian custom which surrounds him. Un-Christian actions should be the exception, demanding explanations for their divergence from the usual. The Christian attitude ought to be so common that it is taken for granted. There should be no question regarding such a matter as personal integrity. *Of course* we will do what is right. There should be no question of Christian fidelity or of Church loyalty. Naturally, instinctively, habitually we will do these things because our lives have been trained to such standards. Then *of course* our Saviour will say to us—"I was an hungered and ye gave me meat." We will answer—"How, Lord; when saw we *Thee*?" And He will reply—"because your whole life was attuned to mine, therefore inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me. I do not judge you. You have made your own judgment. I have simply showed you how."

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, Thy love and care over Thy children through the past week brings us again before Thee in gratitude and adoration. Our weakness has caused us to wander from Thy path, because we have not the wisdom nor the strength to be conscious of Thee at all times of our will, but Thou hast extended the hand of forgiveness to us in our repentance and our sorrow. Lord, make us conscious of our frailties, so that we shall remain close to Thee in thought and word, thus lessening our sins, and our waywardness.

We bow before Thee with grateful hearts, knowing well that it is only Thy love which can regenerate our spirits. Give us the courage and the will to practice that which we know is Thy will, and grant us the great gift of spreading Thy word among those who have yet to hear and to turn to Thee. We ask in Jesus' Name. Amen.

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

Christ's Concern for the Lost.

LESSON: Luke 15. Print Luke 15:1-10.

GOLDEN TEXT: "The Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost." Luke 19:10.

DEVOTIONAL READING: John 10:11-18.

INTER. & SR. TOPIC: Why Christ Seeks Me.

Y. P. & ADULTS: Our Part in Reaching the Unreached.

Three parables of the seeking love of God—1. A story of the shepherd from whose flock one strayed away; The story of the woman whose fortune consisted of ten silver drachmas; The parable of the lost son.

These three parables are not three separate stories but three little chapters of one whole, The Soul of Man. They are related like the three primary colors which mingle in white lights. The natural man thinks very lightly of sin. He is oftentimes more troubled by a physical infirmity than by a moral fault. He will rather suffer a bad conscience than a bad tooth and a trifling breach of etiquette causes him to blush as he never does for some sinful weakness. It is significant that the beautiful parable of The Prodigal Son is found in Luke. In the parable Jesus was referring definitely to the penitent Publican, and to the self-righteous Pharisee. God did not take delight in the sins of the Publican, nor did he regard the latter as perfect, but He is always and everywhere concerned with the return of the sinner to the Father's House. The prodigal son was *lost* by his own wilful choice and he was *found* by his own voluntary returning to his father's love and home.

Emphasize the expression in the story, "When he came to himself." Sin is always a kind of madness, a frenzy in the imagination, an opiate in the will, a poison in the heart, a madness in the brain. When we "come to ourselves," that is when our true self speaks, when we think clearly and reason logically and feel deeply and perceive accurately, then we return to the Father's House, provided our hearts are open and amenable to the wooing of the Holy Spirit.

Riotous living does not mean exclusively wanton and dissipated living; it applies to all sinners for they do with spiritual things what riotous men do with earthly things. The worldly life is always a wasteful life.

The return of the Prodigal Son was voluntary. The father could not force him to return. So God does not force us into paths of righteousness. Love that is compelled ceases to be love. God does not desire the death of the wicked but even He cannot compel them to turn from their evil ways. They themselves must will to hear and obey. There was heard in the soul of the prodigal the voice of his father's love. The beginning of repentance was a kind of return to sound consciousness. The famine, the hunger, the distress were God's messengers calling him home.

Notice that the Prodigal has no excuses to offer. He humbly confesses his sins and asks not for his rights but for his father's mercy. This is what we all need. We may be sure that when a man loudly insists upon his rights that that is precisely what he does not want. He and we all stand in need of mercy.

EVENING SERMON

THEME: ***After the Night the Morning.***

ORVIS F. JORDAN.

TEXT: "The watchman said, the morning cometh and also the night." Isaiah 2:12.
HYMNS: "Light of the Anxious Heart."—*Gorton, S. M.*
"O Saviour, Precious Saviour."—*Angel's Story,* 7 6, 7 6, *D.*

The prophet Isaiah had a program for his people. It was for them to stop fishing in the sea of international politics. The destiny of the Jew was to be the religious leader of the world instead of the political leader. In those days both Isaiah and Micah foresaw a time when "The mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the mountains and shall be exalted above the hills and the nations shall flow into it."

But a nation called to such a high destiny must be just and moral and religious. It would be impossible for Jerusalem to become the religious capital of the world if it were filled with vice, injustice, greed and impiety of all sorts. The divine providence would purge Israel by sending the nation into exile.

There is no wonder that neither in Edom nor in Judah was there much of a favorable public for such a message. Then, like now, men were concerned with commerce and profits and pleasures. The destiny of a nation was to keep its trade routes open through political power and make more and more money to be expended upon pleasure.

Such in very brief terms is the story of an ancient people in a certain epoch of their history. I see in it many analogies with the fate of France which has befallen her this summer. The men who are entrusted with the rejuvenation of this ancient nation have begun at the right spot, and that is to call on France to confess her sins. Perhaps never before has a nation so quickly fallen from the place of a great world power to that of a vassal

state. She had trusted in a Maginot line, but had forgotten her spiritual defences, according to the new leaders of France.

Let us recall the great social and spiritual facts that preceded her downfall. There is the story of an implacable hate toward her ancient enemy. She had abundant opportunity to make honorable peace with Germany, but chose rather the road of bitterness and revenge. Germany could forgive the wounds she received in open warfare, but not the betrayals of her reconstruction period. In this time France became divided by political parties. She had royalists, republicans, socialists, communists and fascists. These overthrew one government after another in the struggle for place and power. There were sit-down strikes and great limitation on the hours of labor. Paris was for many years the home of debasing vices that weaken men and make them unfit. Alcoholism was a growing evil. This is not my picture alone but that of the present government of France.

What do they propose to do about it? There is no possibility of France undertaking re-armament at this time. This is indeed fortunate. They cannot begin a new era of industrial expansion. The seas are blockaded. They have begun where every nation must begin if there is to be a national revival. They have begun with the souls of their citizens.

This wine-producing nation is exhorted by the government to beware of alcoholism. This nation that has produced so many filthy books and plays is now warned by the government against lasciviousness. The land of the sit-down strike is now called upon to face hard work. The land of a brand of liberty that ran into license is now called to self-discipline. The home of modern sceptical movements is to become a place of prayer. The people are urged to find their places in the churches once more.

The preacher of today often meets people who are a bit cynical about examples for the modern drawn from ancient times. Exhortations to Edom and to Judah are almost three thousand years old. They are therefore out of date, flippantly suggests the sophisticated modern. But when men in defeat and humiliation this very summer came to conclusions not at all unlike those of Isaiah, one begins to see that God's spiritual laws have never changed. For a nation that is in the night there may be a morning, but if it continues to sin, only a long night again.

I believe in the revival of France—if not her revival as an empire, then her revival as the home of civilization. It is here that the highest artistic development of modern times has taken place. France has been the home of beauty, of urbanity of conduct and often of religion. Her Joan of Arc is a religious figure. Joan has no parallel in England or America.

But our deepest concern is with regard to our own America. "Watchman, What of the night." Do we face changes in our American way of life that will make an end of our ancient liberties and the beginning of a new era of authoritarianism? Are we making ready for a foreign war? While we talk of material preparations for war have we considered the case of our spiritual defences? May one find analogies between the softness of France and a similar softness in America?

There is a physical softness in America that will distress a good many military leaders. We ride up to the top of mountain peaks instead of climbing. We ride everywhere, but our fathers walked. This softness of physical physique has analogies in the softness of our minds. We have turned our educational process into play, for

otherwise our little darlings will not go to school. Adults will not wrestle with a good book, but get their ideas from movie and radio. It is said that an inventor is about to turn out a record of a book on a celluloid film so that the tired business man can sit of an evening and listen to the reading of a book with closed eyes before he is lulled to sleep. But few of the electorate take the trouble to think. Too often their thinking is done for them by venal politicians who are about to make a big steal.

The growth of vice in America will give any thoughtful patriot pause. Our bill for alcohol is now at the highest peak of our nation's history, over three billion dollars a year. The slaughter on our highways by drunken drivers is a national scandal. Our deaths on the highway are greater than British deaths from bombings.

Gambling furnishes the funds with which evil political machines stay in power. Chicago will never be cleaned up politically until the sinews of political war derived from gambling are taken away. The break-up of home-life has many causes, but one of these is the lack of loyalty and responsibility in the married relationship.

We, like France, have our movements of hate. We are usually hating somebody. Sometimes it is Mexico, sometimes Japan and sometimes Germany. People that hate find it hard to think straight. Sometimes our hate is directed toward minority groups like Jews, negroes and orientals. What the hate-mongers do not see is that these internal movements of hate divide the nation and make her weak in the presence of real international dangers.

In the labor camp we have all the perils that beset France in the past. We have wars and shootings in the Kentucky coal fields. We have had sit-down strikes of the French type in the automobile industry. Those of us who believe in labor unions find ourselves reduced to silence as we observe gangster leaders in control of important unions. And those of us who believe in business men are reduced to silence in the presence of the type of business that loses all sense of responsibility toward the labor that produces business values.

In the religious camp there is neither health nor soundness. Perhaps those of us who live in the larger denominations have neglected certain fundamental duties. In the long run we must have a religion that squares itself with the best learning of our time. It must not be found fighting the assured results of the laboratory. It must be a religion that leads the conscience of the age, and not follows. And it must be a religion which develops more reverence than may be found anywhere else and more sense of the divine leadership.

The churches may well take stock of themselves as to the degree to which they meet these demands of the times. I could wish for a great assembly of Christian leaders, that would cease to boast of achievements, and cease for awhile to talk about financial objectives, and fall to its knees in penitence. The morning will come for religion only after a night spent in a confessional.

Every little church should lift up its head with a new sense of mission. God calls to every church and every church-member, "Who will go for us, and whom shall we send?" Ours is a high and holy mission. We have the prophetic calling to rebuke sin, proclaim righteousness and to rebuild hope.

The church has a peculiar call these days to be the defender of liberty. The authoritarian idea has swept over most of Europe. Not only Italy, Germany, Russia and Spain have gone totalitarian by choice, but Britain and France have for the time adopted this idea by necessity. This is no mere political question. It is one that will influence the future course of religion. Without freedom of speech the church can no longer exercise the gift of prophecy. In Russia the church is chiefly engaged in carrying on

ancient rituals. These have value, but it is the living word which the church must speak to influence life in the largest measure.

The church must defend liberty of speech for its own sake, but also for the sake of the nation. This nation was founded by men and women on the quest of civil and religious liberty. Our founding fathers set up a government which they thought would forever prevent such a tyranny as that of King George. It had checks and balances. To these were soon added a Bill of Rights embodying the sacred liberties of speaking, publishing and worshipping according to the dictates of one's own conscience.

It will never do to assume that these American liberties are safe because we have had them a long time. Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty. It is within the power of the American church to defeat the plans of politicians who seek more and more power over the lives and the property of the citizens.

In these days the church has a sacred duty to call the American people to self-discipline. This is no time for self-indulgence, or careless living. There should be discipline in the use of our money. Millions live on the hunger line now, and this will vastly increase in another year. It should be a discipline that will bring our bodies into subjection and bring them to the maximum of their efficiency. The time calls for disciplined minds that are unafraid to face unpleasant problems, and wrestle with them. Particularly timely is it to remind ourselves that we must not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewing of our minds. The Christian must war against vice in all of its forms, for in times of great social unrest the people will be exploited with many forms of commercialized vice.

It is a time to call people to prayer. The nations that turned their backs on God have lost the steadying influence that comes from a sense of responsibility to the Divine Life. The winds of doctrine that blow around the world these days are often pernicious and evil when looked at from the standpoint of the teachings of Holy Scripture. A people that settles its problems with a sense of responsibility to God is far more likely to settle them right.

Then prayer taps great reservoirs of power. A praying people is a strong people. A call has gone out for a great mass communion in all the churches. In many cities the churches will not hold the people who respond to such a call. At this great communion we are asked for a new enlistment in the cause of Christ.

For this time there is need of new courage. It will come if our hearts are stayed on God. The coward is usually the man who stands alone. The hero is the man who is supported by a sense of comradeship with others, and with a conviction of the blessing of Almighty God. All sorts of fears afflict the people. The parents of young men dread the draft. We hear talk of the invasion of a foreign foe, however absurd that talk is for the present time. The thought of economic upsets and hard times cannot be banished from anyone's mind. Many of our fears will be found to be empty and vain. But whatever hardship may come to us in the future, we should be worthy of the God-fearing ancestors who subdued our wilderness and faced every peril in a calm faith in God.

But this sermon proceeds under a title which suggests a hopeful spirit.

"After the Night, the Morning." It is of the genius of our religion to be hopeful. We are not taught that we shall have no trials and hardships; but we are taught that our trials and hardships may become, in God's Providence a discipline to prepare us for a larger life. Isaiah preached an exile, but he also preached a return. For those who feared God there was to be a share in a larger national life which eventually was to be a blessing to all the nations of the earth.

Jesus told us that there were to be wars and rumors of wars. The great city that he loved and wept over was to be destroyed. These evils were but preliminary to the setting up of his holy kingdom. In the first World War we talked about a war to end war. In a certain sense war must always commit suicide. After the former war came such a sentiment against the war system that for awhile we thought we might be ready for a warless world. In the end Mars *will* commit suicide. Nothing is more fallacious than Hitler's idea that war makes a great people. War has ruined nation after nation, the victors more certainly than those who are defeated. We may be looking out upon the death struggle of an institution that should long ago have perished.

We need not fear for the final triumph of righteousness. While war and sin and evil have the seeds of death in them, and are self-destructive, righteousness, if crushed to earth, will rise again. The way of life taught by Jesus Christ is the only way of life which men and women can live which will preserve life, property and ideals that have been won at great cost.

Truly these days we walk in darkness. Error, sin and hate are all about us. But out beyond the darkening spiritual skies lives God. One day he shall shine upon us again, and his rainbow against the cloud will be the symbol of his promise that he will never desert the children of men. It may seem to us like night. But it is not. It is the time of storm, but some day we shall live to see the light of the Abiding Presence.

MID-WEEK SERMON

THEME: ***The Assurance of God's Care.***

TEXT: Romans 8:28; Deuteronomy 33:27.

We have faced great moments, critical issues of life, when we were seemingly illy equipped for the task. We have felt the burden of our task so great, and our equipment so scanty, that to go forward were to invite disaster. We have had moments when we wondered if even God cared about us.

Earth Has Found No Substitute for God: Deut. 33:27: not merely a line of sublime poetry, but a voice from the distant ages using the language of the heart of mankind. Men have yielded first place in life and heart to many things other than God, and in great crises these other things have always failed them. Surely to believe in God with all one's being, so that one entrusts everything to that belief, surely that is all that the soul needs.

The Assurance of God's Care: "We believe, in the face of the mysteries of an unfinished world, that God orders all things for perfectly wise and

loving ends, that he has every human life in his gracious and holy keeping, and will never forsake the work of his own hands. Inasmuch as he has given to men freedom of will, he is not responsible for their sins or for the miseries that come of these. Yet he is not defeated by our evil doings, but overrules all events for the furtherance of his supreme designs of good." Christ lived for all mankind, yet he spoke the deepest truth to one, the woman of Samaria. He died for all, yet on the cross he yearned over one, the penitent thief. For one coin, the woman swept the house; for one sheep the shepherd faced the midnight; for one son, and him a sorry prodigal, the father wept. God cares with all the feeling of the Divine heart for you, for me.

God's Purposes Finally Prevail: The world is unfinished spiritually. It offers us the dignity of paying our own way, of a partnership with God. So medicine, science, social work, teaching, preaching, all are cooperating with God. Never was there such a time in which to invest a life. Jesus Christ does not clear up all the mysteries, does not answer all my questions, does not fully remove all my doubts, but he does give me the assurance that life is meaningful, that God is present, that he cares, and it brings peace and quietness.

TOPICS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE'S SOCIETIES

CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR: Y. P.—Denominational Day. Eph. 2:19-22; I Tim. 4:12-14.
Jr.—The Son Trusted the Father; did His Will. John 6:35-40.
LUTHER LEAGUE: Sr.—Missionary Day. Acts 8:26-38.
Y. P.—Same.
Inter.—Luthers in Africa. Acts 8:26-40.
WALTHER LEAGUE: January Topic—Success. 7. Success of the Wicked. 8. Problems.

FOR THE BULLETIN BOARD

There is no quicker way to get love than by giving it.
Man's garlands wither on one's brow.
Distinguish between the shadow and the solid which casts it.
The Gospel means and is Good News.
Have you tried to be the man you meant to be?
Is your light "so shining"?
Have you tried standing in the shadow of His grace?
There is no place where temptation's whisper can't reach you.
Life is in the living, not the years or wealth accumulated.
There is a difference between faithful friend and flattering foe.
Every man will be your friend if you are a friend to man.
Nobody knows and nobody cares for the one who lives for himself.

FEBRUARY, FIRST SUNDAY

CALL TO WORSHIP: "Draw nigh unto God and He will draw nigh unto you. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He shall lift you up."
PSALM: 84.
PRELUDE: Burree—*Handel.*
ANTHEM: No Shadows Yonder—*Gaul.*
OFFERTORY: Intermezzo—*Keller.*
POSTLUDE: Postlude—*Best.*
OFFERTORY SENTENCE: "He that soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he that soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. Let each man do according as he hath purposed in his heart; not grudgingly, nor of necessity, for God loveth a cheerful giver."
OFFERTORY PRAYER: Thou alone, Almighty Father, canst judge our hearts, knowing the manner in which our gifts are offered to Thee. Bless our effort to accept Thy discipleship, and lead us on the way. Amen.
BENEDICTION: Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men in whom He is well pleased. Depart in peace.

SERMONS

THEME: ***Builders for Tomorrow.***

RALPH E. VALENTINE.

TEXT: "Well done, thou good and faithful servant." Matt. 25:21.
HYMNS: "We Give Thee but thine own."—*St. George, S. M.*
"Take My Life and Let it be."—*Patmos, 7 7, 7 7.*

Possessions are so intertwined into our home life that they may so easily become masters of it. Many homes have been completely wrecked on the rocks of financial mismanagement. A prominent Domestic Relations Court judge gives "money matters" second place among the causes of broken homes in America. Years, if not generations, of patient Christian teaching in the home and in the church will be required to develop a sane and Christian attitude toward money. In every church group, and around every Christian fireside a study should be made this month of the importance of the stewardship of *giving* to the Christian family.

Home Best Laboratory.

The home is the best laboratory for training in the right use of money. Effective stewardship education for all ages needs the cooperation of the home. The family as a unit must worship God and should, therefore, by common consent share the family income with God. Parents who teach their children how to master and manage money are doing more than they will ever consciously realize, to regulate all other phases of these young lives. Guidance in the use of money is basic in character training.

The spending of money cuts deeply into the family's life. It stands for all that parents and children count as precious. It means food, drink, clothing and shelter. It stands for toys, books, culture, religion. It means service to others, as well as personal comfort and pleasure. To a chemist a silver dollar is only a bulk of silver mixed with lead, zinc, and a small residuum of phosphates and tin. To a loving father it may mean life for a sick child; education for a youth's career; bread to satisfy the hunger of his family. Money is the power that keeps the wheels of the home in gear.

Stewardship is a family responsibility. Many parents, in their attempt to give their children opportunities, ingrain into them modes of selfish living. Families who establish the rule: "We must live in a better house, wear better clothes, drive a bigger car than our neighbors," are training church members and home builders of the future to be ruthless and shallow-hearted stewards. God instituted the family and Christ instituted the church. Stewardship is the tie between these two important institutions and God. In a Christian home there should be taught a distinctive attitude toward money that differs from a non-Christian home. There is now too little difference. The church can hold its youth if parents put the church first in their lives. Stewardship practiced in the home can save the children for the church.

Family Council Plan.

Many Christian parents believe the home should be a democracy. Some families have adopted the "Family Council Plan." They have put into practice the principle of honoring all personal rights. In order that the family may prosper as a unit, each member shares equally in setting up all plans. Important family decisions such as buying or renting a house, administering discipline to any of the members, selecting schools or camps, planning holiday trips and summer vacations, choosing pictures, and many other lesser decisions should be settled only by consulting the family council. Such a policy dignifies and matures growing children.

There are five children in a certain family. One is a boy, seventeen; twin girls, sixteen; a girl fourteen, and a boy thirteen. They used to annoy their parents almost beyond endurance, asking to buy this and to buy that. The parents finally instituted the family council. The boys and girls were taken into financial confidence. It was explained how income and outgo had to agree with one another, how it was impossible to conjure funds out of nowhere. When the children understood what it costs to pay taxes, coal, food, and other fundamentals—they realized how foolish their demands had been upon the family income.

Being treated like adults, these children acted like adults in business matters. Children should administer their own money by earning, saving, spending, and giving under intelligent and sympathetic guidance. By actually counting the cost, children learn how to value and give money. A Christian family is not simply "Dad's family"—it is rather a democracy for all members.

Stewardship and Family Budgets.

Every home should work out a budget. The value of stewardship teaching will be greatly enhanced if parents will put home finances on a cooperative basis, with the entire family aiding in the planning. Children are not so likely to get their "wires crossed" with their parents on the subject of money, if they helped to set-up the family budget and know its limitations. Children will usually cooperate and when necessary sacrifice for the welfare of the family institution.

Only families who carefully budget their income can make substantial financial contributions to the church. Where money is handled carelessly the strain of family expenses will require more than the family earns. Let us budget the income of an actual metropolitan worker earning an annual salary of $2000.00. He is married and the couple has two children—the average American family. The itemized budget follows:

	%	Year	Week
Food	25	$500.00	$9.62
Housing (including heat, light, etc.)	25	500.00	9.62
Clothing	10	200.00	3.85
Automobile (other transportation)	13	360.00	6.92
Church	10	200.00	3.85
Insurance and Savings	5	100.00	1.90
Health	4	80.00	1.54
Recreation	2	40.00	.75
Gifts	2	40.00	.75
Miscellaneous	4	80.00	1.54
Totals	100	2000.00	38.45

A tithe in the budget is the only means whereby this Christian family would have money available for the church. The amount of $3.85 for the church each week must be planned along with every other budget item and rigidly laid aside for that purpose. Each church family in every earning bracket should follow this example in budgeting for the church. The major portion of systematic church support, it is safe to estimate, comes from the medium income homes.

In 1936, according to the report of the National Resources Committee on Consumer Incomes in the United States, 12 million families, or 41 out of every 100, received less than $1,000 from all sources. Eleven million families, or 38 out of 100, received between $1,000 and $2,000; over half of these less than $1,500. About 79% of all families received less than $2,000.00 in that year. Only 4 million families, or 14 out of every 100, received between $2,000 and $3,000 in 1936.

Only 1,600,000 families, or 4 out of every 100 received between $3,000 and $5,000 in 1936. Homes of substantial financial ability are among the 2,120,000 families or 7 out of every 100 with incomes of $3,000 up to $10,000. Let us face the truth about church finances! While some of the higher income homes give generously to the church, a portion of the 79% of all American families who live on the $2,000 and below level, give the regular, systematic, and genuine support to the church. Very careful budgeting is required by these families, to make the proportion of giving adequate.

A Christian family will need some tools with which to begin a system of home financing. The folk will need such items as budget books; savings banks, tithe account books, and guidance literature on the training of children and adults in the Christian use of money. They may need some intelligent guidance in budget making; account keeping; how to administer the budget items; and how to figure the proportionate share in Christian stewardship. The home, on a cooperative budget basis, truly becomes a partnership. God, through Christ and his church, is normally and naturally made one of the partners. This provides the opportunity for genuine stewardship education.

Principles of Home Finance.

Three principles are involved in home finance:

1. *Saving some portion of the income.* Saving is a habit. If this habit has not been established early in life when the income is small, it will be more difficult to acquire later. No matter how small the child is when he receives his first allowance he should have his own bank for saving. Later he should be taken regularly to deposit his own money in his own bank account. Children will learn to handle money by having money to handle. The prac-

tice of giving the child money now and then as he needs it or begs for it is vicious. It not only robs the parent of teaching stewardship, but actually trains the child in the careless use of money.

2. *Wise spending in administering the family budget.* Here one's ideals for life, education, social standing, health and various skills, must determine what is essential or unnecessary. The child should have a second small bank—a spending bank. This is to hold the amounts upon which he is free to draw. He should be allowed within limits to buy what he pleases. All of the good character building values vanish when parents take pity on their "darling child" by giving him extra money when his allowance has been exhausted. By being taught the wise spending of money, young people learn self-control, foresight, independence, and unselfishness.

3. *Systematic giving.* Each individual is a potential miser. The art of giving money is a mastery that must be cultivated and practiced. The child should set aside a definite proportion of all money he receives for giving. He may have a third small bank which contains his "giving fund." It is easy to lead a child to set aside a tenth, a penny out of every dime, for purposes of giving. An offering made at church out of a child's own funds is quite a different thing from a mere contribution handed him by his father. A wise parent will take advantage of such opportunities as this for giving instruction in the use of money. Later the child should be helped to keep an account of his stewardship of giving. He will keep this along with those accounts of savings and spending. Stewardship requires that there be system, proportion, and regularity.

Regular money habits developed in youth will mean great CHURCH BUILDERS FOR TOMORROW. The good stewards of possessions in our churches today are those who have been guided in giving from their youth. Churches that are poorly financed are failing because too many of their members never learned as children how to be good stewards of money.

Youth's world is yet to be. Our stewardship teaching today may vitally influence tomorrow's church. Are we preparing these oncoming church builders with the steadiness and common sense—the spiritual integrity to build the greatest world-wide church that has yet been known? A church that will dwarf ours beyond recognition? Let us remember the truth expressed in this paraphrase from a great English writer: "The church that is today grew out of the institutions of yesterday," and "the church of tomorrow is forming in the institutions of today."

The church of the future is not in the hands of Fate. God has put the "molding clay" into our own hands. How well are we discharging our trust?

Fourth Sunday After Epiphany.

THEME: *The Light From Above.*

MARION GERARD GOSSELINK, D. D.

SCRIPTURE: Matt. 8:23-27.

TEXT: ". . . I am the light of the world; he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." John 8:12.

HYMNS: "My Hope is Built on Nothing less."—*Melita,* 88, 88, 88.
"O for a Faith that will not Shrink."—*St. Leonard, C. M.*

If the sun would cease to shine, we would be enveloped in utter darkness such as we have never experienced before. All vegetation would die and become a decaying mass of disease-breeding germs, causing pestilence and destruction. It would be the death-knell of all physical life. The sun is "the Light of life." It is "the Light from above."

Similarly in the spiritual realm the Sun of Righteousness has healing in His wings. The absence of that sun causes darkness, decay and death. As the sun is the source of light in the physical realm, so Christ is the light in the spiritual. "He is the true light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world."

In His light souls grow, expand and mature into the measure of the fulness of the stature of Christ. Without the sunshine of His presence they become blasted, unfit for the harvest.

I.

Christ says, "I am the light of the world." He calls attention to Himself. He is the focal point as well as the light itself. This is not a selfish trait in Him. It is not egotism, for He is the humblest of the humble. He is but stating a fact concerning Himself which had been proclaimed by the prophets who saw His coming from afar. He is calling attention to Himself for a reason. He wants men and women to see "Him only."

A great many were carried away by His miracles, or rather by the bread which they received on account of His miracles. He turned the rays of Divine truth upon their materialistic minds when He said, "Labor not for the meat which perisheth, but for the meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you." Poor deluded creatures! They looked to Christ for the bodily comforts of life. They got what they were looking for, but they missed the real point. They had their reward. Nineteen hundred years have not seen a great change in that type, for there are those today who look upon the cause of Christ as an aid to their own advantage in society, politics and business. They see in Christ not the Light of life, but an aid to their ambition.

Then there are those who hold up the beautiful teachings of the Christ as the Light of the world, as if His teachings alone would be able to solve all of the difficulties of this old sin-smitten world. They would go a great ways toward purging the world, if they were put into practice, but something more vital and necessary must take place in the hearts of human beings before these precepts will have their highest value. The source must be cleansed before the water will be pure. Whitewashing the pump does not sterilize the contents of the well.

Others there are, and their host is legion, who place the emphasis on the LIFE of the Master. They say, "As He went about doing good, so we, to be like Him, must do as He did." In a sense, this is true. It is a high and noble purpose to "go and do likewise." That is a Christian's privilege; it is his duty. But when Jesus said, "I am the light," He meant just what He said. He did not refer to His miracles, His teachings, nor to the example of His life. He referred to the glory of His incarnation. He meant to say that He was God Who had become a man so that He might reveal God

to men. He, being God, became a man, so that He might save men from darkness and point them to the marvelous light of God. He even died that He might banish darkness forever; that He might bring life and immortality to light. He is the "light from above," sent by the Father to dispel the blackness of sin.

A friend of Alfred Lord Tennyson went to visit him. As they were walking in the great poet's garden, the friend asked him, "What do you think of Christ?" Stooping down to examine a flower at his feet, that sweet singer of England answered reverently, "What the sunshine is to that flower, the Lord Jesus Christ is to my soul."

Christ is the light of the soul. He floods it with sunshine; He purifies it with His life-giving rays; prevents decay and death, and makes the pathway bright as the day.

O Christ, "In Thy light shall we see light."

"Sun of my soul, thou Saviour dear,
It is not night if Thou be near.
O may no earth-born cloud arise,
To hide me from my Saviour's eyes."

II

Christ also says, "He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness." What does it mean to follow Christ? We have already spoken about the teaching and example of Christ, as if the hearing and doing of these things would mean following Him. In the eyes of the world, it would seem to indicate that. A follower must necessarily assent to the teachings and imitate Christ's example, but there will be some who will say "Lord, Lord, did we not do many wonderful works and in Thy name did cast out devils," to whom Christ will say, "I never knew you, depart from me." It means more than hand, lip, or head service. It means heart and soul surrender. It means more than a cheap imitation of the real thing. It means more than the language and outer adornments of the Christian way of life. It means heart and soul surrender. It means that the light of Christ has shined in the soul, and is continuing to shine there, so that the darkness of sin no longer gives cause for groping and stumbling. Only "in Thy light shall we see light." "If we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." Before we can follow Him; before we can fully understand His teachings; before we can pattern our lives after His, we must have cleansing through His blood so that we may walk in the light as He is in the light.

III

Then we "shall not walk in darkness but shall have the light of life." It is a great joy and a rare privilege to be walking in the light. The disciples did it when Christ was with them personally, and some of them kept on walking in the light after Christ had risen from the dead and had ascended to His Father. But as if to make them realize their situation, He said to them before He left, "Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you; for he that walketh in the darkness knoweth not whither he goeth. While ye have the light, believe in the light, that ye may be children of the light."

He wanted them to understand their true relationship to Him while He was still with them. In that statement we see that there is danger that we who have once seen the light may not always see it. Not because the light will cease to shine, but because we may become separated from it.

There are some who have wilfully shut their eyes to it, and are wandering in paths of their own choosing, illumined by false lights which the evil one has placed along the highways of life. There are others who are following it afar off, with laggard steps and slow, and are being in danger of losing sight of its beneficent rays.

"One night a party was crossing the Caspian Sea in a boat. One of the men kept looking up into the sky, and did not take his eyes from a certain star. One of the passengers asked him why he kept looking at the stars. He replied, 'Do you see that star? If we lose sight of that one star, we are lost, because that is the only way we know in which direction to steer our boat.' "

So, if our eyes are not fixed on Jesus, we are lost. If we are not continually looking at Him we shall find ourselves wandering in the darkness of sin. It is more important to see Jesus than anything else in the world, for He is the true light; the light of life; the light from above.

"Light of the world, forever, ever shining,
There is no change in Thee.
True light of life, all joy and health enshrining,
Thou canst not fade or flee.

Light of the world, undimming and unsetting,
Oh shine each mist away.
Banish the fear, the false-hood and the fretting,
Be our unchanging day."

"I am the light of the world; he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."

ARE YOU WALKING IN THE LIGHT?

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, bless Thou our coming together in Thy Name, and help us to be truly grateful to Thee for these hours of fellowship with Thee. Grant us true grief for the sins of the past week, show us the results of our selfishness and thoughtlessness, so we may overcome the temptations to sin.

Fill our hearts with gratitude for the revelation of Thy Word; for Thy guiding hand and Thy loving watchfulness over the present. Help us to lay aside all doubts of the present, and strengthen us for the future, knowing that those who walk by faith in Thee are walking in the Light of Eternal Life. Open our hearts to receive that which Thou hast so graciously and bountifully offered; open our minds to the magnitude of Thy gifts, and cause us to walk joyfully into the days ahead, bearing the banner of Faith in Thee above all else. Teach Thou each one of us the meaning of Thy gifts of harvests as a result of sowing, health as a result of chaste and modest living,

beauty as a result of living wholly in Thee. Teach us the rightful use of these gifts, coupled with the need for a final accounting to Thee.

Fill our hearts with love and yearning for constant nearness to Thee so that we shall be strengthened in times of forgetfulness and human weakness; stay Thou our hands in times of temptation; guide Thou our conduct and our actions so we may help to lead others to Thee and Thy saving Word. We ask in Jesus' Name. Amen.

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

The Individual's Responsibility Regarding Beverage Alcohol.

LESSON: Habakkuk 2:15; Genesis 4:9-12; Mark 9:42-48; I Thess. 5:22.
GOLDEN TEXT: "Abstain from every form of evil." I Thess. 5:22.
DEVOTIONAL READING: Ezekiel 3:16-21.
INTER. & SR. TOPIC: What One Person Can Do about the Drink Question.
Y. P. & ADULTS: The Christian's Personal Duty Regarding Beverage Alcohol.

The Eighteenth Amendment to the Constitution closed 177,000 licensed saloons. Today there are more than six times that number of licensed places dispensing alcoholic liquors. All efforts to reform or regulate the liquor traffic has proven ineffective. This is the clear testimony of history. There is something in the traffic which is itself inherently lawless. It is only a question of time until the excesses to which the liquor dealers are now going will bring about a marked reaction.

The tolerant spirit of the American people can be driven too far. The economic and human waste connected with the traffic is staggering. More than three billion dollars last year was spent for intoxicating liquors. This was money worse than wasted, because it was spent for that which does not benefit men; because it was diverted from legitimate channels where it would have resulted in health and strength, better housing, better clothing, and increased business and revenue to all legitimate dealers. No nation can permanently withstand this terrific economic waste. There is not one single good thing which can be said in favor of beverage alcohol. It is a destroyer. It is the great remover. It removes the furniture from the home, the clothing from children's backs, the food from the pantry, the manhood and self-respect from the heart, the life from the body. Science has clearly demonstrated that its effect while momentarily stimulating is ultimately weakening.

Whether national prohibition as such ever returns may be questioned but certainly in some way or other the traffic must be abolished. Kipling at one time advocated the open sale of intoxicants. After spending one evening, however, in a barroom, seeing large numbers of young people indulging he returned to his home and sat down and wrote these words. "I was wrong. I have been a fool. I was utterly mistaken. It is not good for us to set before our youth intoxicating liquors. The entire traffic should be abolished. It transforms men and women into beasts. From henceforth my voice, my pen and my vote will be on the side of the abolition of this hellish traffic." The fact that the liquor problem has been

made in our country too often a political football must not silence the voices of Christian men and women for at root this is a human problem, a spiritual problem, a problem with which religion and the Church must deal. Anything that destroys life is an enemy of Jesus Christ and of His Church. Only cowards will keep silent.

EVENING SERMON

THEME: ***Guiding Stars.***

(Also Baccalaureate or Commencement.)

FRANK Q. CROCKETT.

TEXT: "The dayspring from on high hath visited us—to guide our feet into the way of peace." Luke 1:78-79.

HYMNS: "Jesus, I live to Thee."—*Lyte, S. M.*
"A Charge to Keep I have."—*St. Ethelwald, S. M.*

This poetic expression "dayspring" appears but twice in the Bible, once in the Old Testament and here in the opening verses of Luke's Gospel. Its literal meaning appears to be *dawn* or *morning star.* The ancients were dependent upon the stars to guide them in their courses on land and sea. In the beautiful Christmas story the wise men from the East are guided by a star to the cradle of him who was "to guide our feet into the way of peace."

We are again in the happy Commencement of Baccalaureate Season with speakers of one generation trying to say a helpful word to another generation, to classes that often include their own sons and daughters. Yet, what can we say? It appears to me that the best and only thing we can do upon such occasions is to offer some Guiding Stars that will help the young graduates steer more safely and wisely, if they will but heed our warning, their own life-craft. The seas of life were never more confused than they are at the present moment and we trust that these Guiding Stars now offered may prove in a degree to be worth a permanent place in your Life's Chart.

The Meaning of Education.

We shall do well to get a better understanding of the meaning of education. *The Meaning of a Liberal Education,* by Everett Dean Martin I can heartily recommend to you. The author calls attention to the fact that education is not a commodity, something that one can "get," it is rather like religion, something that gets you. In other words, it is a viewpoint or an attitude toward life. Martin's definition of education is "emancipation from herd opinion, selfmastery, capacity for self-criticism, suspended judgment and urbanity." This definition is worthy of careful consideration. He gives a briefer one that better fits our purpose tonight—"philosophy at work."

A Good Name.

We have no intention of entering into a technical discussion of philosophy as such, but on the other hand we want to suggest some principles taken from The Book of Books, in other words some Guiding Stars that will enable you to formulate your own life's philosophy.

The first of these is an expression found both in the book of Proverbs

and the book of Ecclesiates, "A Good Name." The verse in Proverbs reads, "A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favor rather than silver and gold." By a "good name" we do not mean something negative, or one who will not steal, lie or destroy another man's home, but a name that means something as a positive contribution to human betterment. In every community and state or nation there are names that mean something. That is what we consider the teaching of this verse, the realization that a good name or reputation is better than great riches of silver and gold, for these material things or tangibles may be lost, as the world has so well learned in these recent years, but a good name is something that lasts.

This brings us to our second Guiding Star.

Being vs. Having.

The most important question that faces youth is that of Being. "What am I to be," stares you in the face at every turn of the road. Later on the sophistication of middle age, or the disillusioning of the advanced years, may cause you to think that having or possessing is the important thing. But I want to urge upon you that you go through life with this spirit or enthusiasm of youth that realizes that Being is more important than Having.

You recall the familiar story from the 19th chapter of Matthew's Gospel, in which we see a young man, the rich young ruler, compelled to choose between Being and Having. The Master seeing the cause of his need, said, "Go, get rid of your material possessions, then you can become my disciple or follower." You recall how this fine young fellow hung his head and went away sorrowful, because he had great possessions. He could not pay the price or face the music. He would rather have than be.

In every language, ancient and modern, there are two words, verbs, that you must reckon with, "to be" and "to have." Not only in the study of language, but in the activities of life we stand at the crossroads and the dilemma faces us. Shall we Be, or shall we Have?

I hope that you will carry with you as one of your guiding stars the words that form our text tonight, "a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." Having is not being.

Alignment With a Great Cause.

We find our last Guiding Star or principle in the statement of the Apostle Paul in writing to the Christians at Phillipi, "for me to live is Christ." The Psychologists interpret this phenomena as "identification" and tell us that it is not found alone in the realm of religion. We are not discussing psychology tonight, but rather attempting to give you some guiding principles, a working philosophy of life.

In all realms of activity—arts, literature, science, invention, discovery or what not—you will find that those who have made their lives count are those who have linked their personalities with great movements. The Master dedicated his life to revealing The Father Above; that was his supreme objective. In the verse mentioned we find that the Great Apostle was willing completely to submerge his life and personality in the work of his Master so that he could say in very truth, that for him to live was for the Nazarene to live, in and through him.

Young people link your life with some great cause or movement. We could multiply illustrations of this principle without number but shall call attention to one only. One of the greatest characters this nation has produced was the incomparable Abraham Lincoln. He identified himself with two great movements, human freedom and preservation of the Union. Other men like William Lloyd Garrison and John Brown fought slavery, but it was reserved for Lincoln to find true greatness in linking his life with two mighty causes.

Young people go forth resolved that you shall carry these three principles with you as guiding stars—A Good Name, Being vs. Having, and Alignment with a Great Cause.

MID-WEEK SERMON

THEME: ***Establishing the Kingdom.***

TEXT: Matthew 6:33.

Topic visionary! Preacher given contemptous or good-natured advice to be realistic. Impractical! Remember human nature! Yet we believe!

God's Unchangeable Purpose: "We believe that the unchangeable purpose of God is the establishing and perfecting of his Kingdom—a society ruled in all its parts by love and righteousness, a society of which Christ is King, and to which all belong who are themselves animated by his Spirit. We believe that the Kingdom of God will finally dominate the life of man, and that in the world to come God will complete and perfect it, the Lord Jesus Christ being manifested in power and great glory."

The Spirit of Jesus Necessary: One cannot write of America since the Revolution and leave George Washington out. Or since the sixties and omit all reference to Lincoln. So of the world and Christ. "You would have to unroll the tangled skeins of centuries, and take out all the threads which have been woven in by men and women who lived in the faith of Jesus." The world has listened to Christ because of a conviction that he comes with all the authority of God's word. For sin, there is the Cross. For the lonely and dishearted, the assurance of God's care. For the dying, the House of many mansions. Ultimately my faith rests on the fact that HE said these things and that he knows.

The Spirit Of Cooperation: The Armour Institute of Technology stands today because Gunsaulus had the vision to use a million dollars, and because Armour had the million dollars with which to translate the vision into fact. It does not have to be a million dollars. It may not be money at all. It may be an idea. It is the bringing of the idea and the power together, and harnessing them, that makes reality, that brings and establishes the Kingdom.

TOPICS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE'S SOCIETIES

CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR: Y. P.—Christian Endeavor 60th Anniversary. Rom. 12:1-5.
Jr.—Christian Endeavor Day. Psalm 37:3-5.
LUTHER LEAGUE: Sr.—The Lost Chapter. Luke 15:4-8; 31-32.
Y. P.—Chastity. I Thess. 4:3-8.
Inter:—Being Trustworthy. Matt. 25:20-21.
WALTHER LEAGUE: February Topic—Living with Others—Your Contacts (Friends).
1. Three Angles, all Acute.

FEBRUARY, SECOND SUNDAY

CALL TO WORSHIP: "Unto Thee, O Jehovah, do I lift up my soul. O my God, in Thee have I trusted."
PSALM: 18.
PRELUDE: Andante—*Smith.*
ANTHEM: Komm Zu Mir—*Barnby.*
OFFERTORY: Prelude—*Thome.*
POSTLUDE: Nineteenth Salmo—*Marcello.*
OFFERTORY SENTENCE: "Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto Him be the glory in the church and in Jesus Christ."
OFFERTORY PRAYER: Lord God of Hosts, we come to Thee with thanksgiving in our hearts and praise on our lips. We are helpless without Thy guidance, and we pray Thee to abide in our hearts, and guide us. Accept these our gifts in Jesus' Name. Amen.
BENEDICTION: The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you.

SERMONS

THEME: *We Make Our World.*
(A Sermon for Young People.)
HERBERT WHITING VIRGIN, D. D.

TEXT: Jeremiah 18:1-3.
HYMNS: "Jesus, Still Lead on."—*Seelenbrautigam,* 5 5, 8 8, 5 5.
"Lord, to Whom except to Thee."—*St. Bees,* 7 7, 7 7.

1. *We are Potters.*

When I was a lad, I used to go to a pottery owned by my uncle, where they used great care in getting clay of the right consistency. It was worked up by the old method of having a mule hitched to a shaft, pulling round and round, and the crusher would grind the clay to the proper consistency. But —many a block of clay thrown upon the potter's turn-wheel was ruined, because the potter was careless and often drunk. I have seen a potter after developing the clay toward the form desired, suddenly lose his deftness of fingers and spoil the design by clumsiness, inattention, or lack of brain coordination. Sometimes carelessness, often evident indifference!

There came a time when I was privileged to go to Biloxi, and having heard of a famous potter there, I sought him out. Going into the shop, the shelves of which were lined with the evidences of his art, I asked if I might see some of his work.

I noticed the man. He was then past sixty, hair white and himself the personification of dignity of manner, and gentleness of spirit. I shall never forget with what care and almost caress he took his product from the shelf and showed it to me. There was a light on his face as he displayed the exquisite lines and the beauty of the design. It was his own noble and artistic soul outbreathed into his fingers as he developed that vessel on the potter's wheel. It was a part of himself.

You and I are potters. We make our world by the kind of treatment we give to our soul. Do you remember the instructions the Almighty gave to Jeremiah? "The word which came to Jeremiah from Jehovah, saying, Arise and go down to the potter's house and there I will cause thee to hear my words. Then I went down to the potter's house, and behold he was making a work on the wheels. And when the vessel that he made of the clay was

marred in the hand of the potter, he made it again another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make it." (Jeremiah 18:1-3.)

The passage seems to imply that our times are so in the hands of God that we are helpless in the decision as to our destiny. But in Isaiah there is a plea to God as Father, petitioning Him, since they have failed in their lives to work out a vessel of honor, and to take the matter wholly into His hands. Hear their cry, "But now, O Jehovah, thou art our Father; we are the clay and thou our potter; and we all are the works of thy hand. Be not wroth very sore, O Jehovah, neither remember iniquity forever; behold, look, we beseech thee, we are all thy people." (Isaiah 64:8-9.)

If you and I get the idea that we have nothing to do with our future and that we are creatures of fate in that we have an appointed and inescapable destiny, then it seems a waste of time to give thought to admonitions of the Word, of conscience and of Providence. But he who reasons thus reasons as a coward who seeks by this moral subterfuge to cover up his derelictions by whiningly saying, "it is destiny." "It is destiny—phrase of the weak human heart; dark apology for every error. The strong and the virtuous admit *no* destiny. On earth guides conscience; in heaven, watches God. And destiny is but the phantom we invoke to silence the one, to dethrone the other."

If we were to do as Jesus indicated to Paul, we would discover ourselves in some of our acts as he discovered himself. It was the familiar figure of the long pole with a sharp iron spike at the end, which the plowman or driver used to speed up the oxen. If, as did sometimes happen, the ox resented the gentle touch and kicked back, it was only to feel the severer prick of the spike on the rump or flank.

As Alexander MaClaren says, "One infallible way of judging of the rottenness or goodness of our actions is that we should bring them where they will all be brought one day into the brightness of Christ's countenance. If you want to find out the flaws in some thin, badly-woven piece of cloth, you hold it up against the light, do you not? And then you see all the specks and holes, and the irregular threads. Hold up your lives in like fashion against the light, and I shall be surprised if you do not find enough there to make you very much ashamed of yourselves. Were you ever on the stage of a theatre in the daytime? Did you ever see what miserable daubs the scenes look and how seamy it all is when the pitiless sunshine comes in? Let that great light pour on your life, and be thankful if you find out what a daub it has been, whilst yet colors and brushes and time are at your disposal, and you may paint the future fairer than the past." (MaClaren, Acts of the Apostles, page 302.)

2. *Make Your World a Blessed World.*

It is not what other individuals do—as much as *that* affects the sum total of influence—as it is what *you* do, that will affect *your* life and through you the lives of others.

Christ's viewpoint was always the individual. He was concerned about the masses, 'tis true, but only as the masses were made up of individuals. You see a forest in the distance. It is impressive as it adds to the beauty of the landscape, but it is only when you single out a tree that you begin to realize its beauty and poetry. As men think of *a* tree, so our Lord thinks of men as individuals. "The Master never saw a name, a title, or a crown. He only saw a man."

With Jesus, personality counted first. It was not a means, as one expresses it "unto some lesser end, but the grand end in itself." Our Lord had a sense of the great value of one single man. "What shall a man profit if he shall gain the whole world and forfeit his life?" This statement is rhetorical and calls for a negative answer. On one side he puts the world and on the other one single life and in his view, that one life outweighs the material life of the world, natural and created.

We Make Our World.

We make our world by having the right view of life. Two boys went to gather grapes. One was happy because they found grapes. The other was unhappy because the grapes had seeds in them.

Two men, being convalescent, were asked how they were. One said, "I'm better today." The other said, "I was worse yesterday."

When it rains one man says, "This will make mud"; another, "This will lay the dust."

Two boys examined a bush. One observed that it had a thorn; the other, that it had a rose.

Two children looked through colored glasses; one said, "The world is blue"; the other said, "It is bright."

Two boys had a bee; one got honey, the other got stung. The first called it a honey bee; the other, a stinging bee.

"I am glad that I live," said one man. "I am sorry I must die," says another.

"I am glad," said one, "that it is no worse." "I am sorry," says another, "that it is no better."

One says, "our good is mixed with evil." Another says, "Our evil is mixed with good."

Now, if I know anything about the Christian faith, it is only when you catch step with Christ by surrendering your will to him that life begins to have the right perspective.

I recall the statement of Edward Everett Hale, Jr., as he relates the change which came over him when he found Christ as Saviour. He states, "Plans, possibilities, ambitions of one sort and another no longer interested me. I became conscious of a greater interest, a greater love, let me say, for people in general as I met them or saw them." He learned through a sermon that what the Greeks saw who told Philip that they would see Christ, was not a poet, not a philosopher, not a leader of the people, but one whose life had been a constant sacrifice for the salvation of the world. It then became clear to me that I had been giving up the element of self in life that I might accept Christ as Master. (From, J. M. Frost, An Experience of Grace.)

That is what is needed that each may make the right world for himself and for others. Jesus Christ, God's Son is the only one who will give us the right perspective that we may live in a world good for us and good for others. Why not start right with him?

Septuagesima.

THEME: ***Two-Talent Men.***

FRANK E. WILSON, Bishop of Diocese of Eau Claire.

SCRIPTURE: "He also that had received two talents came and said, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me two talents; behold I have gained two other talents beside them." Matt. 25:22.

HYMNS: "A Charge to keep I have."—*St. Ethelwald, S. M.*
"Thy Way, Not Mine, O Lord."—*Ibstone,* 6 6, 6 6.

There is always something interesting in things which are great or spectacular or unusual. We boast of the size of our cities, the height of our buildings, the mass of our fortunes. Let a man be overgrown in girth or in height and he gets his pictures in all the newspapers. Let a man do some strange, spectacular deed and public attention is riveted upon him. We have acquired the habit of looking for the unusual. We are most likely to estimate people or events in terms of their divergence from that which is customary. Plain, ordinary persons or things we pass by as inconsequential and we pin our faith on the extraordinary.

Following this standard of judgment, we are quite likely to determine our own value to the world by the extent to which we are talked about and we know that we will be talked about in proportion to the sensational character of our habits. Therefore the most undesirable thing in the world is that which is common-place. Be different; be the exception to the rule; inspire comment even though it be of an unpleasant nature. Unusual persons are the only ones who ever get anywhere. Progress, as we understand it, is dependent upon leaders of exceptional gifts and extraordinary methods are the ones from which we always expect the greatest results.

Now, by way of contrast, I would like to refer you to the middle section of our Lord's well-known parable of the Talents. You remember how the story runs. The first servant presented his Master with the original five talents entrusted to him and with five additional talents which he had acquired by judicious handling of the capital sum. The second servant produced his original two and another two besides. But the third servant could show nothing better than his one talent without any increase—offering a number of specious excuses for his obvious negligence. Whereupon the first two servants are heartily complimented by their Master for making such good use of their opportunities but the third is roundly condemned for his ineptitude. The first servant represents a great success; the third represents a great failure. But it is the one in the middle who is representative of the major portion of mankind. Generally, in considering this parable, we fix our attention on the first or the third servant. That is because we respond most readily to the spectacular. But a little further thought will convince us that the second servant is really the most important figure in the whole story.

Most of us are two-talent men and women—people of medium abilities and medium opportunities. Most of us will never cut any very large figure in our day and generation but all of us may cut some sort of figure. The point of this central section of the parable is that the size of the figure is of relatively small moment. It is the style and character that count. If our Lord had desired to tell a story illustrative of phenomenal success in contrast with dismal failure, He would have described only two servants. Picturing three men teaches plainly that the number of the talents is not the important feature—it is the way in which they are handled, be they many or few. That is why this parable is not meant exclusively for geniuses or failures. It is meant for everybody because it is the two-talent people who make up the great body of humanity. More than that, they are the ones who keep human life reasonably sound and stable.

Geniuses may be very useful personages but they are not the most comfortable people to have around the house and the idea of a world full of them would be little short of a night-mare. Our modern tendency to exag-

gerate the importance of the unusual and the spectacular is in danger of leading us astray. We are in a hurry to place too great reliance upon our geniuses and not enough on the average man.

Geniuses gain prominence not because they reflect their surroundings but because they are different from the common life about them. You might pick out a number of leaders in our own country at the present day who are anything but representative of the nation as a whole. George Washington was a self-sacrificing, patriotic, clear-headed gentleman who was concerned only with the best interests of his new country but he was surrounded by bickering opportunists and was beset by the rival jealousies of the confederated states until he was nearly driven to despair. If the country had really been represented by Washington, it would have had far less difficulty in getting started on its way. On the other hand, the leaders of the Church in the sixteenth century were corrupt beyond words but in the lives of the common people real Christian piety still prevailed. There would have been no Reformation to unseat the leaders if it had not been true that they failed to represent their own followers. If you would know the spirit of an age, you must study the habits of the plain people rather than the ideas of the prominent personages.

This is why you will frequently find that the finest of the saints have appeared in periods of great spiritual decadence. Their lives stand out for the very reason that they are different from the average life of the time. Judas Iscariot is one of the best known of all the Apostles—not because he represented apostolic ideals but because of his unapostolic treachery. When all is said and done, it is the ordinary people who determine what we are in any period of history.

All honor, then, to the two-talent man of whom we see so much but of whom we hear so little. It is he who does the world's real work. It is he who realizes the dreams of the geniuses and carries out the programs of the leaders. He marks the real advance of civilization because no culture can be intrinsically higher than that of its average people and he is the average. He knows that the bulk of life's duties are simple, ordinary tasks, just about two-talent calibre in size. But he also knows that the larger things can be done only upon the foundation of the lesser. More than that, he knows that the man who is unwilling to do the lesser can never become really competent to accomplish the greater.

The Rev. F. W. Boreham, in a charming volume of essays called "The Silver Shadow," resurrects an old fairy story. In ancient days a stone-breaker sat by the road-side preparing stone for the repair of the highway. He was grumbling over his menial task when a fine looking lord went galloping by. The stone-breaker breathed a wish that he also might be a lord. Immediately the fairy granted his wish and he suddenly found himself elevated to the aristocracy. But it was not long before this new lord met the king and he promptly wished that he were a king. This wish also was granted by the fairy and he soon found himself travelling in regal state. One day as he was considering the great power of the sun, which was able to make even a king uncomfortable in the heat of the day, he found himself wishing that he could exercise power of a similar degree. All at once he was translated to the skies and began pouring down his bright beams upon the earth below him. Presently he was irritated by discovering a cloud floating before his face and blotting out his beneficent rays. Evidently there was something more powerful than the sun and he expressed another wish. Whereupon he was changed into a fleecy cloud and, having gathered more moisture, he began to deluge the earth with showers. He watched his own work with much satisfaction until he spied a stream which was blocked by a huge rock damming up the water as he poured it down the hillside. Fretfully he exclaimed, "I wish I had a

hammer to smash that rock." No sooner said than done. There he was once again at his original task with his hammer in his hand breaking stone at the side of the road.

The old fairy story serves as an admirable illustration of the fallacy that only important people count for anything in this life. More than that, it is just in this respect that our modern tendencies take on one of their most unChristian leanings. Christianity constantly reiterates its age-old plea that it is quality, not quantity, which is essential. It is not the number or the size of your talents but the use which you make of them. Yet the usual interest today is in the magnitude of one's fortune rather than in the use to which one puts it. We are more concerned over the growth of our business than its character. We are more eager to equip our houses with all the latest conveniences than we are to adorn our homes with the highest virtues. We talk incessantly about standards of living, meaning the things with which we live, and we talk altogether too little about our manner of life, whether it be accomplished with many things or with few. We refuse our two talents because we all want to have five. But our Lord's policy is quite different. He urges us to live well with our two talents and soon they will be doubled.

You are the one who determines the Christian character of the world today. A few five-talent Christians can never realize the Kingdom of God but a great many two-talent Christians can shortly bring it to pass. Take care that you do not make the Christian life too much of a professional experience. You cannot leave it to the clergy to live the Church's life. Even if they were as good as you want them to be, they could not possibly do it in your behalf. You must do it yourself and no one else can. You may honor the saints and applaud the Christian goodness of your spiritual leaders but that does not absolve you from your fundamental obligations to our Lord and Savior. God does not ask you how well disposed you may be toward the five-talent Christians. He does ask what you are doing with your own two. Quality, not size, is the Christian criterion. For, in the long run, all size is a relative matter and every Christian life looks small before that of Jesus Christ. The nearer we come to him, the more we realize the insignificance of any size we may ever attain. Spiritual quality can be the only test in his presence. Another religion has taken to itself the watchword "God is great." It is the genius of the Christian Gospel to proclaim the finer message that "God is love."

PRAYER

O God, give us courage to live another day according to Thy will. Let us not turn weaklings and cowards before the difficult tasks confronting us. Help us to attack the work before us with courage and steadfastness, knowing that Thou dost walk with us. Before Thee all things are possible, and even those of us who consider ourselves not especially gifted can do the impossible with Thy help.

Heavenly Father, strip us of that which would keep our minds on ourselves and our temporary comforts, rather than the great tasks before us, tasks that

are creative and God-like, needing men and women forgetful of their own welfare but strengthened in Thee. Help us to set aside our petty longings, and lose ourselves in the great task of carrying Thy message of love and salvation to all men in every corner of the world, particularly those lands that are suffering from wantonness and hatred and strife. Forgive us our own sins, and make us strong in Thee. We ask in Jesus' Name. Amen.

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

The Christian Attitude Towards Possessions.

LESSON: Luke 16. Print Luke 16:10-15, 19-23.

GOLDEN TEXT: "Ye cannot serve God and mammon." Luke 16:13.
DEVOTIONAL READING: Isaiah 58:6-11.
INTER. & SR. TOPIC: Getting and Spending.
Y. P. & ADULTS: The Christian Use of Possessions.

This parable of the Unjust Steward sets before us a rich man and his steward, two common men of the world. There is no close correspondence to God on the one side and to God's children or God's enemies on the other side. Notice that nowhere does the Master approve the shrewd unscrupulous action of this steward. The steward was not simply a house manager but an estate manager, a man who has general charge of another's business.

The lesson of the parable and the only teaching that Jesus draws from it is this—use this world's goods in order that you may win friends, not in the perishing houses of earth, like this unjust steward did, but in the everlasting abode of Heaven; be prudent and far-seeing, not with that steward's shifting craftiness, that answered only the moment's emergency, but with the far-seeing prudence that meets the demands of Eternity.

In the second section of the lesson which deals with the Parable of Lazarus the teacher should lay emphasis on one of the indirect lessons, namely, that personality beyond the grave is unchanged. After death, Dives was the same selfish individual he had been before death.

The main point of the lesson is the absolute trust which this rich man had put in his possessions. Instead of possessing them they possessed him. There is no suggestion of gross outward sin. The parable is almost unique; full of judgments reversed and wonderful surprises. It is perhaps the most striking and terrible ever spoken by the Lord. The parable is practically an expansion of the Beatitudes and woes contained in Luke 6:20-26.

The rich man received what his choices and his life called for. In nothing are men allowed to have their own way more unreservedly than in the matter of the future.

The Bible presents one actual and one imaginary example of final impenitence. The actual example is Judas Iscariot who was expressly termed "the son of perdition," and of whom our Lord says that he alone of all the glorious company of the Apostles was lost. The imaginary example is the rich man of this story.

EVENING SERMON

THEME: *Should Such a Man as I . . . ?*

ALVIN E. MAGARY, D. D.

TEXT: "And he said, let us meet together in the house of God and let us shut the doors of the temple, for they will come to slay thee.
And I said, Should such a man as I flee, and who is there that, being as I am, would go into the temple to save his life I will not go in." Neh. 6:10-11.

A great man, this Nehemiah, a patriot, a man of practical ability, a man of magnificent courage, a man of faith. If you want to read one of the best stories in all literature, take your Bible, this afternoon, and read his own account of the rebuilding of Jerusalem's walls.

He had his enemies. They tried to ruin him by ridicule and by political lies. They tried to intimidate him by threats. At last they hired a false prophet to counsel him to take refuge in the temple, to use religion as a means of evading a brave man's duty. The heathen were against him, the politicians and profiteers and racketeers were against him. They always are against such men. But he stood to his ideals, he finished his work, and won his victory.

The Influence of a Fine Tradition.

Nehemiah's position as confidential retainer of the Persian king, and the readiness with which he was accepted as leader when he appeared in Jerusalem, make it evident that public service was a right and obligation of his birth. That would explain why, when his brother, Hanani, came to him with the news, "They which are left from the captivity are in evil plight, the walls of Jerusalem are broken down and its gates burned with fire," his feeling was so strong that he wept and, according to the ancient Jewish historian, Josephus, he prayed, "How long, O Lord, wilt thou overlook our nation, while it suffers so great miseries and while we are made the prey and spoil of all men?"

We are frequently urged to free ourselves from the past. No doubt that is right. The new wine, said Jesus, cannot be kept in the old wine-skins. Times come when, even though it be painful, we must break with the past, forget what is behind and reach forth unto things of the future. But one of the most hopeful signs of our time is to be seen in the increasing respect that is paid to the men and women who passed in and out through these church doors three-quarters of a century ago.

A few years ago, when we were all feeling so clever and so rich, "Victorianism" was a term of scorn. Anything dated in grandfather's day was dowdy, ridiculous, obsolete.

A few of the shallow intelligentsia still talk that way; but there are signs that "intelligentsia" is giving way to intelligence. As one of the most brilliant of our younger theologians recently said, "More and more I feel myself influenced by traditions which, ten years ago, I should have scorned to observe." More and more, such men are seeing that what the Psalmist calls "the seat of the scorner" is a cheap place in the theatre of life.

I commend to your consideration the place of tradition in your life. It may be worth considering if our fathers' pious habits, their observance of the day they called "the Lord's Day," their constancy in marriage and aversion to divorce, and many other of their habits and convictions that we sometimes call "narrow" were not better than the helter-skelter way into which some of us have fallen. We are broad-minded, to be sure, and this is the twentieth century; but there are some things for which the son or daughter of your father and mother ought to be too good.

We are right in believing that we should not be prisoners of the past. We are living in the twentieth century and we must not fall into the blindness of the Pharisees and be unable to discern the signs of the times; but when it comes to questions of cowardice, of disloyalty, and of vulgarity, there is but one ideal for the son of your father, today, as for the son of Hachaliah twenty-four centuries ago.

A Sense of Personal Dignity.

We owe something to ourselves. We must pay the price of being what we are. The plays of Shakespeare contain no finer word than that spoken by Hamlet to Polonius when he bids the old man look to the comfort of the strolling actors.

"My lord," says Polonius, "I shall use them according to their desert."

"Much better," answered Hamlet, "Use them after your own honour and dignity."

There is virtue in the tale of the Scotsman's prayer, "Lord gie us a gude conceit o' oorselves." It is true that there are some people who seem not to need any fuller measure of that particular blessing than they now have; nevertheless, a man ought not to hold himself too cheap. There is no contradiction between a noble humility and a courageous self-respect.

In all the relationships of life there are implications of dignity and honor. No man need be so poor nor so obscure as not to have a sense of personal worth. Let us "use them according to our own honour and dignity" and we shall not fail to play a part in life of which we need not be ashamed.

Some of us were talking, the other day, about the prevalent let-down in the support of churches and Christian enterprises. We cannot give to these causes according to what we think they are worth because we cannot know what they are worth. No man can appraise the value of the church. It is not a matter of arithmetic; it is a matter of conscience, and conscience is our own sense of self-worthiness reminding us of what is due our own honor. Let a man regard his own dignity and he will not be cheap, he will not pinch pennies, he will not practice the miserable evasions and excuses which make the "slacker" contemptible in the eyes of his neighbors.

Yes, we must pay for the right to respect ourselves. Not with pompous vanity, but with dignified sincerity shall we face the dangers and the duties of our lives, remembering again the play of Hamlet and the words of Polonius to his son,

> To thine own self be true,
> And it must follow, as the night the day,
> Thou canst not then be false to any man.

The Obligation to Others.

Suppose this man Nehemiah had weakened. Suppose he had fled for shelter to the horns of the altar and forsaken his task. How many lives would have been evilly affected by his act!

Suppose Jesus had cringed from the cross. "Come down from the cross," they cried, "He saved others; let him save himself." What would have been the loss to millions of men and women if he had yielded to temptation and spurned the cross!

It is not a wholesome thing to be too conscious of our influence on others, yet none of us can avoid the responsibility of knowing that the consequences of our acts are never borne by ourselves alone.

When the Apostle Peter came to Antioch, where Paul and Barnabas were working, they received him as a friend and fellow worker and he entered heartily into their plans. Then came certain Jewish Christians from Jerusalem and Peter began to hedge. He yielded to social pressure. He sought to escape the responsibility of having convictions. "And," wrote Paul afterwards, "others dissembled likewise with him, insomuch that Barnabas himself was carried away with their dissimulation." Right there, through a man being untrue to himself, the church of Christ might have been wrecked in its beginning. It was by the wisdom and courage of Paul, who saw the danger, "withstood Peter face to face," and talked plainly to him, that the wavering disciple was recalled to a sense of his responsibility.

We cannot betray ourselves without betraying others. "I'll stand and take whatever may come," Nehemiah might have said, "if not for the sake of the traditions in which I was brought up; if not for my own dignity and honor; then for the sake of those who trust and follow me."

The crowd mocking beneath the cross was right. Jesus could not save himself. To save himself would have been to repudiate himself. Such an one as he must bear witness with his death. "To this end was I born," he said, "and for this cause came I forth." So must you and I say. We must maintain the integrity of our own lives. We must vindicate our claim to self-respect. We shall not argue with those who would persuade us to unworthy courses. We shall not involve ourselves in unprofitable discussion nor seek to impose on others the standards we apply to ourselves. When we are tempted to choose ignoble ways, there will be a score of arguments to convince us that we are justified in saving ourselves, in indulging ourselves, in excusing ourselves. The answer to them all is the same, for the answer is in our own valuation of ourselves. More potent to save us from sin and folly than any ethical discussion is the question Nehemiah put to himself,

"SHOULD SUCH A MAN AS I . . . ?"

MID-WEEK SERMON

THEME: ***The Fellowship of Faith and Love.***

TEXT: Matthew 16:18.

Millions, outside of Rome and Canterbury, accept and quote these words. They believe that their assemblies are an enlargement of that little group to whom Jesus spoke. They believe that so long as they can make Peter's

confession and be inspired by Peter's faith they are in apostolic succession; they are a Church of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Church Of the Lord Jesus Christ: Jesus did not use "My" very often. He said, "My Father . . . My Friends . . . My Church." These were his true possessions. Jesus wrote no book, consecrated no holy place, compiled no ritual, set up no form of church government, named no successor. He founded a society which was to be a brotherhood of believing men gathered round his person to carry on his work. "We believe that, as Jesus Christ gathered and still gathers round him a fellowship of faith and love, it is his will that those who through him believe in God should unite in a visible Church. We believe it to be his purpose that, through their common life of worship and service, they may learn to be like him in faith, hope and love, further the ends of his Kingdom, proclaim his gospel to all mankind, and be his fellow-workers in promoting knowledge, humility, charity, virtue, and health, and every form of social justice and right. We believe that the Catholic or Universal Church is the whole company of the Redeemed, and we recognize as belonging to this fellowship all who are united to God through faith in Christ. We receive, as Divine gifts to the Church, the Holy Scriptures and the Sacraments of the New Testament. We believe that through these Sacraments—Baptism and the Lord's Supper—received with faith, there are conveyed to men the blessings of salvation."

The Foundations of the Church: Christ was looking for ground on which to build his Church. Jews generally had rejected him. He was outside Judea. None of the mass said, "Messiah!" Peter said, "The Christ!" He wanted souls that recognized his deity, who saw God in him. 1 Cor. 3:11.

The Fellowship of Faith and Love: How shall we apply all this to anything, anyone who is not the Lord's?" "Ecclesia Kuriake"—the Lord's assembled, summoned.

TOPICS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE'S SOCIETIES

CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR: Y. P.—Tolerance. Luke 9:49-50. Gal. 3:26-29.
Jr.—The Junior Pledge. Matt. 10:32-33.
LUTHER LEAGUE: Sr.—What is the Matter with Our Times? Isa. 1:2-9.
Y. P.—Choosing a Life Partner. Gen. 24:1-28.
Inter.—Being Loyal to Christ. Acts 7:54-60.
WALTHER LEAGUE: February Topics—Friends. 2. Basis for Friendship.

FEBRUARY, THIRD SUNDAY

CALL TO WORSHIP: "Demetrius hath the witness of all men, and of the truth itself, yea, we also bear witness; and thou knowest that our witness is true."
PSALM: 27.
PRELUDE: At Sunrise—*Diggle.*
ANTHEM: Ye That Dwell in the House—*Spinney.*
OFFERTORY: Entreaty—*Salome.*
POSTLUDE: Festive March—*Blackmore.*
OFFERTORY SENTENCE: "O Jehovah, revive Thy work in the midst of the years; in the midst of the years make it known."
OFFERTORY PRAYER: Heavenly Father, Thy love is beyond our human understanding, but our souls rise to Thee in response to Thy grace. Bless us and our gifts, and teach us to give as Thou gavest.
BENEDICTION: Grace be unto you, and peace and understanding from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

SERMONS

THEME: ***The Uncertain Day.***

HARRY W. STAVER, D. D.

TEXT: Joshua 1:1-11; 3:1-6.
HYMNS: "Thy Way, Not Mine, O Lord."—*Ibstone,* 8 8 8, 6.
"My God and Father, While I Stray."—*Leith,* 8 8 8, 4.

Joshua and his officers were busy giving directions and issuing final commands to the people of Israel. It was a momentous hour and those directions and commands were imperative in view of the venture immediately at hand. According to the Scripture record, we read that "the officers went through the midst of the camp and commanded the people saying: When you see the Ark of the Covenant of Jehovah, your God, and the priests, the Levites, bearing it, then you shall remove from your place and go after it, that you may know by which way you must go; for you have not passed this way heretofore." The record also informs us that Joshua spoke to the people saying: "Sanctify yourselves, for tomorrow Jehovah will do wonders among you." Joshua and the officers under him delivered these words to the people of ancient Israel just before they were to cross the Jordan and commence their active campaign in the conquest of Canaan. We speak them again, in the momentous hour of our present experience and in full view of the Jordan we must cross and the conflict we must wage ere the Promised land is won.

In the Israel incident, we are told that the people faced an unknown and uncertain way. It was new, strange and unfamiliar country to them involving an experience they had not previously had. That fact is made specific in the word of the officers to the people, "You have not passed this way heretofore."

There is a parallel to all that in our own case today. In more ways than one the circumstance that now confronts us is an unknown and uncertain way. No man, at this moment, can fore-tell what is in store of weal or woe and few are bold to even hazard a guess. In a very real sense it is true of us, as it was true of the people of Israel, we "have not passed this way heretofore."

It is a strange and unfamiliar world in which we find ourselves now living.

"We are in an epoch of anarchy," as Carlyle said seventy-five years ago. Nor were his further words more emphatic then than they are now: "Look where one will, Revolution is come upon us. We are in an age of revolutions. All sorts of new ideas are afloat; all kinds of things are coming to be subjected to fire, as it were and hotter and hotter blows the element round everything." We have not "passed this way heretofore."

It is a strange and unfamiliar country—a world we've never seen before, nor ever expected to see, and from the agony of which we "pray without ceasing" to be delivered. Who of us ever dreamed that war would be waged as it is now being waged in the world? Who ever imagined that destruction could be so ruthless and ruin so wide-spread among the nations? Who ever thought to come upon a day when the peoples of whole nations would be sent scurrying to cellars and holes in the earth to hide from death and things worse than death? No! we have not "passed this way heretofore." It is an experience we have not known till now.

To return to the Israel incident, we learn that Joshua and his officers gave to the people certain directions and commands to the end that they might know "by which way they MUST go." Fortunate is that people, in any age, whose leaders are wise—not wise in their own conceits as some leaders are—but wise with that wisdom which "cometh down from above." For nothing do men need more, in time of confusion and chaos, than counsel and direction regarding the way they must go.

And there is our own situation. If ever we needed sound counsel and sane directions and sober commands we need them now so that we may "know by which way we must go." If ever we needed wise plans and effective procedures we need them now so that we may not err in our undertakings. If ever we needed unity of interest and coordination of effort and oneness of purpose we need these things now lest our valor be wasted and our strength prove futile. And if any questions that emphasis, there is immediate and abundant evidence to uphold it in world affairs today and the persuasion spoken by the Master himself: "A house divided against itself cannot stand."

Who shall give the commands and speak the directions, and what shall be the nature of them? There is only one answer to such a question. The leaders of the people must give the commands and give the directions—leaders in government, in industry, in education, in society, *in religion.* And the nature of their directions must be such as the time and circumstance demands and the highest we know approves. And this is the witness of all history, the experience of men and nations: according to the wisdom or folly of the leaders the people prosper or perish.

What directions did Joshua speak of himself and through his officers to the people of Israel? Their directions were two-fold, taking cognizance of the necessity for outer preparation and being mindful of the imperativeness of inner reinforcement. No individual, no nation, is ever adequately equipped for the uncertain way, either in respect to the possibilities it holds or the perils that attend upon it, except that individual or nation is equipped both outwardly and inwardly. The sacred and the secular are not so separate as some imagine. Neither is the material and the moral so alien to each other as we are prone, sometimes, to think.

In the specific case of Israel, the officers bade the people saying, "When you see the Ark of the Covenant of Jehovah, your God, and the priests the Levites bearing it, then you shall remove from your place and go after it." To all intents and purposes that word corresponds to all that external necessity to which men must be obedient if the way ahead is to be negotiated successfully. But the outer necessity is not all; there is the inner necessity. Joshua did not stop with merely bidding the people to follow the Ark of the Covenant. He also said to the people, "Sanctify yourselves."

Every leader recognizes the part morale plays. He knows that if the spirit within is broken, outer weapons avail little or nothing. It is, therefore, no mean nor superficial counsel that Joshua spoke to the people when he said, "Sanctify yourselves." Neither is it any empty utterance that high voices speak to us amidst world affairs today. We are arming with utmost haste, outwardly preparing for the uncertain way. There are differences of opinion concerning the rightness and wisdom of that, but in the light of Joshua's procedure and the fate of the unprepared the necessity for it seems too obvious to argue. For all that, the inner affairs may not be obscured or ignored or neglected. And the summons to "sanctify" ourselves is no idle summons. Our very liberty and life, itself, depend on our obedience to it.

Heartening as church statistics and membership rolls may be, all things considered, a goodly portion of America has strayed away from God, from the church, from the "faith of our fathers." There is no real conviction about religion in many of our people. There is no solid, enduring devotion to the church. There is no deep-rooted sense of moral responsibility, no consistent persuasion as to spiritual values, no vital acknowledgment of God in their ways.

In the words of one of the prophets in Israel, we have "forsaken the fountain of living water and hewn us out cisterns that can hold no water." We have no technique of triumph. The whole circumstance of today, the mad rebellion of the Godless against God, the hatred of unbelievers for Christianity and the church, the determination of atheists to destroy individual liberty, the bloodshed and ruin that attend such ideals and ambitions and ends—what does it all mean and demand of us if it does not mean and demand that we must follow the "Ark of the Covenant" and "sanctify" ourselves? We must not be "reeds shaken in the wind," fearful and doubting, but strong in the knowledge of an outer preparation and filled with courage that comes from God through the sanctifying of ourselves.

And then Joshua speaks the altogether radiant word:

"Tomorrow Jehovah will do wonders among you."

He who believes in God does not despair of God nor of the world that God holds "in the hollow of His hands." Rather is his confidence, because God is God and Man is man, like that which Thomas Curtis Clark speaks in his poem, "New Vistas," saying:

> "A day will come, in not undreamed of years,
> When men shall wake with singing on their lips.
> Their toil will bloom with hope, uncursed by fears.
> Then lust will die, and gold will lose its lure.

The lore of love will prove the ample cure
For all earth's ills.
By softly flowing streams
We men of earth shall find again our long lost dreams."

Sexagesima.

THEME: *Stars in a Dark World.*

FREDERICK W. HATCH, D. D.

SCRIPTURE: Philippians 2:12-18.
TEXT: Philippians 2:15.
HYMNS: "Feeble, Helpless, How Shall I . . ."—*Vienna,* 77, 77.
"Jesus, the Very Thought of Thee."—*St. Agnes, C. M.*

When Paul speaks about human nature he sees the heights to which it may rise and the depths to which it may sink. Now he is saying that man may come "to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ," and now he is describing man as those who "revel in every kind of wrong-doing, wickedness, greed and depravity." Our text speaks of a "crooked and perverse generation" but there are also "lights in a dark world."

It is easy for us to put such matters into the far past. The text is a description of Paul's generation, when Nero was on the throne and Rome was filled with slavery and paganism and immorality. But what about our generation? Does the text have any meaning for our day?

It is true we are living in a different world. There has been progress in thought and invention. Many are the achievements in science, education, philosophy and invention since Paul's time. Are we, however, living in a better world? We should be, for we have had the influence of the life and teachings of Jesus Christ for all these years. We have learned to some extent the values that lie in social endeavor and in co-operative action. We have learned through costly experience the value of democratic government. Yet the human heart is "deceitful above all things and desperately sick." Underneath our boasted culture is the animal residuum, and the bestial lurks ever ready to spring into action against our human gains in good-will. Surely our times are like those which Paul describes as a "crooked and perverse generation."

To-day our world is in a bad way. It is a dark picture of godless paganism, beastly war and ruthless bloodshed. Personal values are trampled under foot. There is the crushing of human freedom and justice. There is a loss of honor among nations. Smaller countries have no security against the selfishness and violence of their larger neighbors. Dictators spring into places of power in national life and rule by purge and greed and selfish ambition. The heart grows sick as it sees the blood-soaked fields of battle, the long trains of ambulances carrying the wounded, the shambles that are left of a once lovely village or proud and beautiful city, the streams of refugees bereft of relatives and homes, perhaps forever. There is also the release of fear, prejudice and hatred, forces that tear down the life of the spirit.

Let us turn for a moment to our own country. The moral conditions are none too good. A recent survey finds that there is a certain frankness and

freedom that descend to the plane of license. There is also a promiscuous relationship among men and women that militates against self-respect, conscience and stable home building. Cocktail parties have become popular to an amazing degree. Drunk driving is on the increase in spite of heavy fines and punishment. The radio advertising of liquor is vicious. Magazines flaunt pictures of girls with cigarets in their mouths. Many moving pictures make heroes and heroines out of wrong types. The influence of such pictures is powerful in its effect upon our children and young people. Many newspapers print too many crime details and sordid incidents.

Another thing that we must face is the fact that many Christians are below par. They have little interest in the church or in movements for community betterment. The spiritual nurture of their children is neglected. The fine art of home building is never learned. There is little time, thought or money for the things of God. A form of modern paganism has gripped them so strongly that their chief desire is self-indulgence. Responsibilities are thrown overboard. Obligations are in the main repudiated.

But thank God this is not the whole story. Paul spoke to his dear friends in the church at Philippi, reminding them that they were to be stars in a dark world, and that they were to offer men the message of life.

Upon that dark Roman world Paul himself, and those who reproduced the life of Jesus made a profound impression. Through the faithful witness borne in those early days, and through the martyrdoms of those times a new light was shed upon the darkness and a new era was ushered in. They were but offering a message of life and light which had been brought into the world by their Master. Jesus was the Light that had come, a Light that shone in the darkness and the darkness had not overcome it. And the darkness never will.

The words of the text are a challenge to Christians in our modern times. Christians are still to be stars in a dark world. In the High Sierras on a summer night one is struck by the splendor of the stars. They seem to hang like lamps in the heavens. The Milky Way, with its twenty billions of stars, seems radiant in the surrounding blackness. One's attention is drawn to high places and the dark night is almost forgotten. In the midst of a present crooked generation Christians should shine with such a steady and brilliant light that the darkness would be forgotten. Yes, Christians should evidence such sacrificial lives of unquenchable good-will that the world would be obliged to take notice. Christians should be known everywhere as the champions of human freedom, justice and peace.

At the southern tip of Maryland, where the Potomac river flows into Chesapeake Bay, there is a tall lighthouse. It is a matter of honor and pride for the keeper to see that the light shines brightly every night. Radiators and windows are polished with scrupulous care. When the night closes in the light shines far out upon the waters. Many a passing vessel has been kept away from the dangerous reefs. The Christian must give diligence to see that his life is so ordered that he may become radiant and redeeming, holding forth the word of life.

In the midst of Oriental darkness there is a brilliant planet sending forth its light to bless our generation. Kagawa of Japan is pointing our world

with a new emphasis to Jesus Christ. He is rebuking the military madness of his own people; he is praying for welfare of China; he is bringing to the whole world a life that is steadily revealing the spirit of Jesus. He is also setting forth to the world the possibility of peace and happiness. He is saying that economic activities cannot be left to the selfish instincts of the race, but that world peace can come only when men and nations take the road of cooperative effort in an atmosphere of good-will and brotherhood. So Kagawa shines like a star in a dark world. May God multiply the stars until the darkness shall be dispelled.

have imagined some healing efficacy in the water itself. This was a demonstration that they could be healed by nothing but faith in Christ resulting in implicit obedience to Christ. "As they *went* they were healed." As we obey we come into fuller and fuller life. As we walk in the way it grows plainer. It is by doing the will of Christ that we learn more fully what that will is. "And as we go we are healed." As we do the outward forms of religion—baptism, joining the Church, partaking of the Communion, attending Church services, prayer, Bible reading, Christian work for others—the spiritual realities back of these forms enter into our lives.

the safety of his kingdom, but rather, "Is it well with the young man, Absalom?"

What a marvelous love he possessed! How like the character of the forgiving father in the story of the Prodigal Son, King David is. How much like the love of God, as Jesus was attempting to describe it, was this love of David for his faithless son. The other day I heard a man say: "We may fight one another with the bitterest hatred on the battlefield, we may there break all of God's laws of love, but when the battle is over there is still the love and mercy and forgiveness of God expressing itself in the laws of nature that attempt to bind up our wounds and make us whole again. As truly as Jesus preached it and Paul discovered it, "Nothing can separate us from the love of God, not even our own lack of faith and loyalty."

Well, the messenger evaded David's question about his son by replying, "Blessed be the Lord thy God, who hath delivered up the men that lifted up their hands against my lord and king." In other words, he was saying, "You have won. The victory is yours! You're a successful king and general." And David was all of that, and he knew it; but he also knew that while he was a success as the king of Israel he was a failure with his own son, a failure as a father.

How often that is the case! Some of the strangest tales of domestic tragedy are based upon the fact of the history of the prominent. Some of the world's greatest domestic scandals have developed in the lives and in the homes of those whom the world has called successful and great.

To be the right sort of fathers and mothers we need something infinitely more than wealth or social prominence or political prestige. Mere affection in the home, is not enough to qualify a man or a woman for the responsibilities of parenthood. Along with our affection we need an ever increasing amount of intelligence to be good parents and counselors for youth in these days. Paul, writing to his friends in the Philippian Church from the prison in Rome, said, "And this I pray that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and all discernment."

And that is indeed a worthy prayer for the Church in these days, "that our love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all discernment." There was an old chorus we used to sing in our church: "O how I love Jesus, because he first loved me." That sort of sentimental love is certainly not enough. I would much rather have a love for Jesus because of an intelligent recognition of the value of his way of life in a world like ours. Let our love abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all discernment. One of the saddest cries in all the literature of the Old Testament comes from the lips of David when he hears of his successes on the field of battle but realizes the failure of his affection for his son, "O my son Absalom, my son, my son, Absalom! Would I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!"

There are a few people today who are saying point blank, "Youth, in these days, deserves no consideration. Our young people have not measured up to the opportunities they have received. At great expense, educational facilities have been given over to our youth with all too little response or appreciative achievement."

We must all admit that generations past have been profligate with the opportunities they have piled up for this generation to enjoy, and it is true that too many times those opportunities have been taken as a matter of course. There are, at the same time, many evidences of our genuine affection and our real concern for the welfare of our youth, but I wonder why we have lacked so much knowledge and discernment in dealing with the problems of youth.

Last week the Dean of the School of Journalism of Columbia University in speaking over a national radio network, related the fact that members of the student bodies of both Dartmouth and Yale Universities had petitioned the government to keep America out of war, and that as a result of their petitionings these students had received a thorough-going verbal spanking from the editors of several of our large newspapers. They were accused of being "Reds" and "Nazis" and "Fifth-columnists," whereas the fact is that theirs would be the blood that would be shed in case of war and not that of the editors. How intelligent is modern civilization in its concern for its youth when by the hundred thousand they are called upon to lay down their bodies, their lives, and their souls in each new generation.

How intelligent is our concern for the youth of the land when we allow the liquor traffic to flaunt its tantalizing appeals before every one of our young people every day; on the radio, in the newspapers, and in the magazines our young people read?

We have worried through a depression, over old-age security and pensions, but how intelligent has been our concern for youth when today our young people are graduating from high schools and colleges, disillusioned, depressed, and discouraged with the prospect of little but war in consequent moral and economic bankruptcy of the world as we knew it?

We can thank God that for the most part, the Church today as always holds an intelligent concern for youth: in the establishment of institutions of higher learning, of vocational guidance centers and clinics, in Church and vacation school programs, in institutes, conferences, and assemblies—intelligent concern is expressed in the guidance that is offered.

We can thank God that there are in the Church today, millions of godly parents whose concern is so deeply rooted that their daily prayer is something like that of David's,—"My son—my daughter—would God I might die to give thee security and happiness." But let us as parents add to that prayer the petition that God will grant us intelligence and discernment with all this our deep affection and concern.

MID-WEEK SERMON

THEME: ***The Revealing Word.***

TEXT: 2 Timothy 3:16.

Here under my hand is a book completed eighteen hundred years ago, and still selling at the rate of over six million copies a year. Our English literature from Geoffrey Chaucer to Margaret Mitchell is indebted beyond payment to

this book. This Book has given us all our thought about God. And yet no other book has been so greatly abused, so badly misunderstood, so little used, as the Book of books.

The Revealing Word: "We believe that God has revealed himself in nature, conscience, and history, so that never in any nation has he left himself without witness. Yet the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments record a clear and evergrowing revelation of God as faithfully and unchangeably Redeemer, which is made complete in Christ; they therefore contain, in a supreme sense, the Word of God, and are needful for the full understanding of his purpose, for reconciliation with him, and for life according to his will. Of this we are convinced by the witness of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of men to and with the Word; and the Spirit of God, thus speaking from the Scriptures to believers and to the Church, is the supreme authority by which all opinions in religion are finally to be judged." To reveal God as helping and aiding and redeeming men is the ultimate purpose of the Bible. Ever since that first day in Eden the Bible has been moving toward the revelation of God in Christ.

The Use of the Bible: Having found God in the Bible, we still need it if we are to make life what it ought to be and if we are to get out of life its best and highest possibilities.

Search the Scriptures: With the light you have, and with the light Christ will give you. A naturalist sat on the lawn with his family watching the fireflies. He drew out a pocket Bible, caught two of the flies, and placed them at either end of a verse: "How manifold are thy works, O God! In wisdom hast thou made them all. The whole earth is full of thy glory." One verse stood out, the rest of the page was dark, but by moving the flies from verse to verse the whole lesson was revealed.

TOPICS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE'S SOCIETIES

CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR: Y. P.—Brotherhood. Gen. 4:9. Acts 17:24-28.
Jr.—Character—Self-Control. Prov. 16:32. I Pet. 3:10.
LUTHER LEAGUE: Sr.—Foreign Missions. Isa. 60:1-5.
Y. P.—The Marriage Service. Matt. 19:4-6.
Inter.—Christian Friendship. I Cor. 13:4-8.
WALTHER LEAGUE: February Topics. Friends. 3. How Can I win Friends.

FOR THE BULLETIN BOARD

Live for a cause that merits but lacks assistance.
Mistakes are fatal only after prolonged repetition.
You can't enrich God by your gifts, but you can enrich yourself.
Not even a Ford can run long on reputation alone.
You can do only as you have learned to do without.
One doesn't hunt flies with a shotgun.
It is only on the downgrade where you can coast.

FEBRUARY, FOURTH SUNDAY

CALL TO WORSHIP: "But concerning the times, and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that aught be written unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. When they are saying peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them."

PSALM: 116.

PRELUDE: Meditation—*Morrison.*

ANTHEM: Lord of Our Life—*Fields.*

OFFERTORY: Nocturne in E Flat—*Chopin.*

POSTLUDE: Recessional—*Parker.*

OFFERTORY SENTENCE: "Cast thy bread upon the waters; for thou shalt find it after many days. Give a portion to seven, yea, even unto eight; for thou knowest not what evil shall be upon the earth."

OFFERTORY PRAYER: Thy word is our guide in life, Heavenly Father, and we bring our gifts with gladness of heart, knowing that it be Thy will to use these portions for the need of Thy children among us. Bless our gifts to Thy service.

BENEDICTION: My peace I give you, in the Name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

SERMONS

THEME: *The Path to Peace.*

HUGH THOMSON KERR, D. D.

TEXT: "First King of righteousness, and after that King of Peace." Hebrews 7:2.

HYMNS: "Teach me, My God and King."—*St. Andrews, S. M.*
"Guide me, O Thou Great Jehovah."—*Pilgrim,* 87, 87, 47.

The half forgotten figures of history leave behind them footprints on the sands of time. It is so with this obscure character Melchizedek. The one thing that dominates this strange story is the dual relationship. He is king. He is priest. He rules men. He serves God. That is just the point. He has authority with men because he is a servant of God Most High. It is put into one significant statement, "First King of righteousness, and after that King of peace." That is the order. "After that—King of peace." First righteousness, then peace.

We are all eager for peace. There is nothing we crave so much as we crave peace. We have prayed for peace. "Give peace in our time, O Lord, for it is thou Lord only that makest us to dwell in safety." We are all eager for peace. We are ready to pay money for peace. And yet we are like children crying in the night. War mocks our prayers. War laughs at our conferences. War makes sport of our programs. We are not ready to pay the price, the full price, for peace. What, then, is that price? "First righteousness, and *after that* peace." "There can be no peace, saith the Lord, to the wicked." Peace is a by-product. We secure peace by enthroning righteousness.

That is God's path to peace, for this is a moral world. "God does not pay at the end of every day, but in the end He pays." This war, which we deplore and which we would dissociate ourselves from, follows the law of cause and effect. Where there is friction in an engine there is noise and confusion and war. There is friction in our world. Things are not right. It is not right for nations to have a double standard of morals, one for the

individual and one for the government. If it is wrong for you and me to pile up debt, it is wrong for the government to do so. If it is wrong for me to spend other people's money for my own benefit, it is equally wrong for the government to do so. Things are not right. It is not right for nations to break solemn pledges and repudiate their promises. It is not right for big nations to tyrannize small nations. It is not right to call physical weakness a sin against the Holy Spirit. It is not right to build up national policies on the vicious principle that "Might is Right." In such a world there can be no peace. It is not right to defy power, to expatriate and destroy people, to pauperize or persecute helplessness, to destroy religion and to desecrate and rob churches. God will not stand by and suffer such things to go on unchallenged, and God's people cannot stand by and allow wickedness to vaunt itself.

God's way is the way of righteousness. First righteousness, and after that peace. That is God's way. Open your Bible and you will come upon this fact before you have turned many pages. What do these old and familiar stories of the sin and fall of man mean? Read them again. If the principle of "first righteousness, and after that peace" does not hold, then the Bible is fiction and its record a fraud. The divine order never changes. The constant refrain of the Old Testament is that the false prophets "have healed also the hurt of my people slightly, saying, Peace, peace; when there is no peace." That is the repeated theme. "The work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness, quietness and confidence for ever." "Righteousness and peace have kissed each other." "Oh that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments! then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea." "The mountains shall bring peace to the people, and the hills, in righteousness." The last vision recorded in the Bible is of one who comes out of heaven riding upon a white horse "and he that sat thereon was called Faithful and True; and in righteousness he doth judge and make war." Do not misunderstand. This is not a war sermon but a peace sermon. It points the only way to peace. It points to the reason why the Peace of Versailles broke down. "First King of righteousness, and after that King of peace." Righteousness first, then peace as a by-product.

There is nothing that bad men and demons want so much as peace. That is why all sorts of evil influences get mixed up with peace organizations. That is why Communism endorses peace programs and joins peace societies. Hitler, himself, is the apostle of peace. Believing in war, he talks peace. He proclaimed to all the world that he had gained all his victories by peaceful methods. It is always so. Russia proclaims her peace policies. When Jesus came into the presence of demons and made war on them, casting them from their thrones, they cried out, "Let us alone. What have we to do with thee, Jesus thou Son of God? art thou come to destroy us?" That is the "slogan" of every demoniac influence in the world, "Let us alone!" Hitler wants to be let alone. Stalin wants to be let alone. Japan wants to be let alone. The liquor traffic wants to be let alone. Every crooked and corrupt politician wants to be let alone. As long as there is a King of righteousness that cannot be. "I came," said Jesus, "not to send peace on earth, but a sword." We cannot evade His words. He is the great disturber of the peace. When

He comes, evil men cry out, "Hast thou found me, O mine enemy!" Righteousness and truth are always ready to take up arms against iniquity and error. The prophet of the Old Testament cried out in the midst of social unrest and national decay, "O thou sword of the Lord, how long will it be ere thou be quiet?" And the answer came, "How can it be quiet, seeing the Lord hath given it a charge?" How can we have peace, seeing the Lord hath spoken concerning righteousness and mercy and justice?

We must see and never forget that this principle is in the very heart of God. This Melchizedek is a foregleam of Christ Himself. This is His insignia, "First King of righteousness, and after that King of peace." That is the measure of His life and work. That is the meaning of the Cross, "Having made peace through the blood of his cross." Will you think about that. The Cross is the very justification of God, that He will in no wise clear the guilty. "Ye that were afar off are made nigh by the blood of the cross." The Cross is God's vindication, "He is righteous and just." There is no soft easy way to the goal of peace, either in the heart or in the home or in the world. "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God." First righteousness, then peace. First the Cross on Calvary, then the Easter morning. First repentence, then peace and joy. "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord." We need that note sounded today. We need a revival of the inner truth of the doctrine of hell. "If thou wouldst enter into life, keep the commandments." The chief concern of our times should be not peace or comfort or security, but truth and justice and righteousness. The nations that have led the conscience of the world have not had as their mottoes the words security, comfort, ease, but the words righteousness, justice, truth. We must work for a more just world. We must set things right in diplomacy, in economics, in trade, in politics, as between nation and nation. We must create a consciousness for law, national law, international law; for only "righteousness exalteth a nation." When his life was wrong, struggling through his Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde experience, St. Paul cried out in agony of soul, "O wretched man that I am!" When his life was right he exclaimed, "Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory."

This is the heart of the Christian religion and of Christian morality. It holds in its keeping the meaning of the Cross. It finds continuous expression in the Holy Sacrament. Jesus took bread and said, "This is my body, broken for you." What does that mean? Some of us, during the Great War, have seen men brought in from the front, their bodies broken in the hell out of which they had come. They were proclaiming in action more eloquent than words to their fellow men, "This is my body, broken for you." That is not sentiment. That is sacrifice. And Jesus took the cup and said, "This is my blood, shed for you." What a sermon it is! He made peace through the blood of the Cross. First the Cross, then the Easter victory. First King of righteousness, and after that King of peace. God's way is not the easy way. It is the hard way. It is the way of blood and tears; but it is the only way that leads to peace. It is the only practical way of renouncing war, of getting rid of the tears and bloodshed of war. It is the only way by which we can escape continual warfare and find the path to enduring peace.

Quinquagesima.

THEME: *Bread of Life.*

HAROLD E. CARLSON, D. D.

TEXT: "I am the Bread of Life."—*John* 6:35.
HYMNS: "Lord, Thy Word Abideth."—*St. Cyprian,* 66, 66. Trochaic.
"O Draw Me, Saviour, After Thee."—*Compline,* 88, 88, 88.

I.

It makes a world of difference who makes a statement. Only Jesus Christ could truly say, "I am the Bread of Life". Suppose that the President of the United States should announce a benevolent presidential act and close with the words, "I am the Bread of Life." To every soul for whom the words of Christ are sacred such a statement would be a sacrilege. Suppose the ruler of a land should say to his subjects, "If you give me your support you shall have bread; if you fail me you must go hungry." This has virtually been the declaration of rulers in some countries during the last decade. But it would be difficult for such a ruler to gain many loyal adherents if he were to apply the words of Jesus to himself and declare, "I am the Bread of Life."

Yet the pathetic fact is that men today over the world are so materialistically minded and spiritually confused that it would not be difficult to becloud masses of people on the high spiritual fact of Jesus as the *Bread of Life.* On the economic background of the passing hour a benevolent autocrat might be conceived as Bread of Life. But on the background of eternal truth covering both the seen and the unseen, who is there among men who would seriously affirm, "*I am the Bread of Life?*"

H. G. Wells, of England, one of the world's greatest thinkers of our generation, some years ago contributed an article to an American magazine in which he discussed the six greatest men that ever lived according to his scale. One would naturally think that he would include Jesus of Nazareth in such an article but he did not. And the reason he gave why he did not include Jesus in such a list is more significant than the fact that Jesus was omitted. He stated that Jesus towers so far above all other human beings that comparison would be futile.

II.

Now the term "bread" has today become a figure for that which covers the physical wants of life. "Bread" connotes food—any food, all food. The religious meaning of the term, however, is all-inclusive of both the physical and spiritual worlds. To the Christian, "Bread" denotes that on which life today and forever, individual and national, physical and spiritual, in the last analysis utterly depends.

Jesus is therefore not "a" Bread, but "the" Bread of Life. If Jesus were only "a" Bread, one of many brands, there is no doubt that H. G. Wells would have included Jesus in his list of the six greatest men of history. But it is clear that Mr. Wells is of the conviction that Jesus is the only genuine "food" containing life's necessary vitamins. Anything which might go by the name of "bread" would only be better or poorer substitutes.

How long can a man live without food which contains all the necessary vitamins for life? To attempt to live on food which does not contain the vitamins for sustaining life, sooner or later means death. Some years ago the newspapers carried the story about a man who had wagered with another, in order to prove the high food value of peanuts, that he could live solely on peanuts for six months. The first few weeks the papers were full of flattering statements on the value of peanuts as a food in the light of the experiment being conducted. But after the first month the papers began to retract on some of the sweeping assertions which they had made. The man was determined to win his wager. But somewhere between three and four months the papers announced the death of the man. It is a parable of our generation. Men have been trying to live on "foods" which do not contain the necessary vitamins.

What are some of these "foods?" First of all, war. It has been said that we went to war over bread. We honestly believed that we were fighting in 1917-18 to make the world safe for democracy and to put an end to war forever. But now we know that we fought a war to hold markets and gain control of such raw materials as iron, coal and oil. We went to war, not because of the lack of "food," but for control of "food."

Another food we have tried to live on is the future. Money came in easy following the War and we judged everything by ease and prosperity. Instead of banking on yesterday in the 1920's we wrote promissory notes on the present, and in the 1930's we discovered we had nothing in the banks with which to make the payments. We bought radios and automobiles and houses on the installment plan, banking on the future which came over night and held us in its merciless grip. And we have not yet learned the lesson of gambling on the future. A peddler selling rugs called at the door of my home just yesterday and said: "Buy now and pay later." When he saw that my wife was not convinced by his suggestion he added: "Why I have promises for payments at Thanksgiving, at Christmas, and some even for next Easter." People are still recklessly gambling on their future. When the few are such gamblers they themselves may be the chief sufferers, but when *many* are, society suffers such a fateful day as October 1929.

But the best indication that men are still living on husks instead of whole wheat is the verdict of the American Association of Advertisers. This organization recently listed the motives which have proven the most satisfactory in selling commodities by magazine advertisements. The most powerful advertising motive today, according to the statement of this organization, is "snobbishness"—an element always accompanying ease and prosperity. When I had read the article I laid the magazine down and said, "I doubt it." Then I decided to put it to the test by the ads of the very magazine in my hands. I turned to the first full-page ad and I looked no more. This is what I read: "Don't Let Athlete's Foot Turn Your Friends Against You. Use ——." The appeal to snobbishness is the motive of advertising every conceivable commodity depending upon wide advertising for its sales. Such advertising speaks more loudly of the spiritual shoddiness of American citizenship than of strategy to sell certain brands of merchandise. Will men ever learn what is real, abundant food, and what is substitute!

A third kind of food our generation has tried to live on is adulterated morality. Real character and unflinching principle have been taken with a grain of salt in our generation. Character and principle have been used, not so much as food as seasoning.

Not so long ago an editorial in a leading city newspaper closed with a bald statement that we need contracts for buildings and improvements to make more jobs for

unemployed, and to create those marginal excess funds on which the politician grows fat. Can a nation long exist when it seeks to live on such adulterated morality?

Now and then we read in the newspapers about stockholders of defunct corporations seeking to get out from under their obligations to small depositors by every ingenuity and technicality of law. How long can a nation exist that lives on making and breaking contracts at the convenience of selfish gain? When moral and legal obligations are meaningless it is clear evidence that the vitamins of national life are wanting.

James Truslow Adams, America's leading contemporary historian, has said that Tammany Hall politics of New York is working down into the rural town and hamlet. In both of our great cities, New York and Chicago, it seems that we have abdicated completely to the forces of evil. Despairing of the task of turning out the corrupt elements, the honest citizen, it seems, with fear and trembling politely asks the unscrupulous forces of evil not to be quite so grasping. What "food" for "the land of the brave and the free" to live on!

These are but a few of the kinds of "food" on which our generation has been trying to live. What can we expect of life tomorrow if a nation has only such food for body and soul?

III.

We need today the Bread of Life—not more Bread of Death! A friend of mine not long ago talked with two prominent national business leaders. One of them had just returned from Washington where he had taken an active part in discussion of far-reaching importance to the textile industry. The other is an executive in a company which has developed a business reaching into almost every home in America. Both of them said practically the same thing: "We need economic adjustment. But more, we need a religious revival. But we can never get the former until we are on the way toward the latter." That is the verdict of two industrial leaders who said that, not in the spirit of self-sufficiency, but out of the buffetings which have driven them into humility to face eternal truth of God.

An English authority on current affairs, Harold Nicolson, said not so long ago in *The London Daily Telegraph:*

"*America is passing through a phase of deep spiritual disillusion. She imagines that she has lost her soul. The fact is, she is about to find it.*"

The utterance is such as we would expect to come from some great prophet of the pulpit and not from the newspaper desk. Over the whole earth men are hungering for the Bread of Life. During the hectic days of prosperity in the 1920's, Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick in a sermon before the students of Harvard University said: "The swiftest road to Hell is to have everything to live with, and nothing worth living for." And then he added: "Unless we can establish the spiritual ends of life in terms of character and justice, our civilization will ruin itself with the misuse of its own instrument." His prophecy will become a reality unless we turn to feed on the Bread of Life.

Jesus spoke the words of the text to a little group of disciples yet they are eternally true. He changed the moral standards of the world but He was more than a teacher of morals. He is not so much known to the world as a teacher of morals as the Saviour of the world. If Jesus had been only a great teacher of morals we would say, "Jesus *was* a great moral teacher." But since He is the Redeemer we say, "Jesus *is* the Bread of Life." The world

today needs not so much the ethics of Jesus as the redeeming power of Jesus. "Redemption" is eating the Bread of Life—facing the commerce of life in all its circumstances in the spirit of Christ. In the measure that our attitudes and motives are lifted up by His spirit into unselfishness and love and Brotherhood is Christ the Bread of Life. Jesus is not the Bread of Life by merely applying His morals to plans and programs and codes for personal and social reform. If our nation is to be regenerated, and that demands a Savior rather than an ethics teacher, it must come through the regeneration of each of us. Regeneration is not a matter of law and morals and politics. It is a new birth in the heart of the individual American man and woman. "Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which satisfieth not? Hearken diligently unto Me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness."

Ash-Wednesday, February 26.

THEME: *Thy Will be Done.*

JOHN H. HANGER.

TEXT: "Thy Kingdom Come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." Matt. 6:10.

HYMNS: "My God, My Father, While I Stray."—*Hanford,* 8, 8, 8, 4.
"My Jesus, as Thou Wilt."—*Jewett,* 6s. *D.*

Men and women in Europe and in the Balkan states and in Finland today pray the Lord's Prayer, and as they enter upon the petition "Thy kingdom come," they do it in a spirit of helplessness. Certainly man is doing little toward the establishment of God's kingdom. If we are tempted to any such attitude let us read once more something in the spirit of Francis Thompson's

Hound of Heaven

Not where the wheeling systems darken,
  And our benumbed conceiving soars!
The drift of pinions, would we hearken,
  Beats at our own clay-shuttered doors.

The angels keep their ancient places:—
  Turn but a stone and start a wing!
'Tis ye, 'tis your estranged faces,
  That miss the many splendored thing.

But (when so sad thou canst not sadder)
  Cry:—and upon thy sore loss,
Shall shine the traffic of Jacob's ladder,
  Pitched betwixt heaven and Charing Cross.

Yea, in the night, my Soul, my daughter,
  Cry,—clinging Heaven by the hems;
And lo, Christ walking on the water
  Not of Gennesareth but Thames!

The Kingdom of God is waiting upon us to pray with the very lives we live, the prayer that Jesus taught us, "Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven."

I.

Those are strange words indeed. Someone has said that they may be the greatest words ever found upon the lips of man or they may be less than nothing. When I say, "Thy will be done," it may be that I have found God and that I love Him with all my heart so that it is a joy to do His will, or it may be that I know nothing whatsoever about God or his plans for me and out of my dumb confusion I ask that God's will be done.

The other day I read a story of a little two year old girl who was dying of rickets, malnutrition, and disease. The father was himself diseased and the mother had suckled her baby while under the influence of liquor, and there as that little tyke lay in agony, the mother and the father stood consoling one another with the insistence that their baby's death was the will of God.

It seems to me we would reveal our ignorance of all that Jesus taught us so patiently about God, if we believed that when Jesus knelt in the Garden of Gethsemane and prayed, "Not my will but Thine be done" he believed that God wanted him to die upon a cross, rather than that God wanted him to be true, at all costs, to the gospel Jesus was to commit to a needy world.

To pray "Thy will be done" in blindness may be worse than no prayer at all.

II.

On the other hand, that prayer may be the sublimest of human utterances:

> Thy will be done. No greater words than these
> Can pass from human lips, than these which rent
> Their way through agony and bloody sweat,
> And broke the silence of Gethsemane
> To save the world from sin.

And well we know those words may come from agony and bloody sweat. God's will in our lives may involve suffering and hardship. No one has ever accused Albert Schweitzer or Wilfred Grenfell or Kagawa of taking the easiest road. Many men have lost their faith in God because his will did lead them through some Garden of Gethsemane.

Dr. Stanley Jones tells of a young Indian convert to Christianity who once testified at one of Dr. Jones' round table conferences, "Since I have become a Christian I have no more troubles. God has saved me from all my troubles." Dr. Jones says that testimony reminded him of a picture he had seen on the cover of a magazine. Two babies were in a boxing ring with boxing gloves on. One of them was watching some butterflies flitting past while the other was preparing to land a blow on his unsuspecting chin. Jesus never promised deliverance from trouble to anyone who followed God's will. In fact, he said something about not bringing peace but a sword.

When we pray, "Thy will be done" we must realize that that will expresses itself in order and dependability and law throughout the universe. If I lean over a cliff too far, I'm going to tumble. That's God's will expressing itself. If I step in front of a fast moving train or automobile, I'll get hit, the laws of momentum are a part of God's will. If I put a bullet through my head in a vital spot, I'm going to die. That's God's will expressing itself.

You remember when the mob crucified Jesus, they said, "He trusted in God. Well, let God come and save him if He desireth him now." There

were some, I suppose, who had seen many men die on similar crosses, but who thought because God did not intervene to stop the effects of their own barbarous cruelty that was evidence in itself that God no longer desired him.

This must also be said, God's will is expressed in beauty and truth and nobleness, always.

Some of you have gathered from my preaching that I have some rather strong convictions as a pacifist. I believe that war thrives on lies and hatreds and all that is unChristian. And at the same time I believe some of the noblest ideals men have ever held have been expressed in time of war. I do not believe that God ever willed that a man should die at the hands of his brother, but I do believe that He willed that the soul of man should be so conceived that a man can be challenged to lay down his life for his highest ideals. That is the will of God in the matter.

To me, nothing is uglier in all the world than the idea of Christ's crucifixion upon a cross. Few have ever experienced the harsh brutalized agony of such a death. But at the same time, nothing is more beautiful in all the world than the faith in God and in man which was expressed upon that cross. I cannot think the cross was God's will at all. God's will revealed itself in Christ's loyalty and devotion to a cause in spite of a cross.

III.

How many of us, who profess to follow the Master, include this petition, "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven," in our real and earnest prayers of everyday. Too often we say it thoughtlessly when it comes in our Lord's Prayer.

Spurgeon once said, "You had just as well stand on a hill and talk to the moon as to say the Lord's Prayer with just the thought in mind of getting through."

When we consider this petition as a serious prayer, it is small wonder that we so seldom pray it, for so many times we are tempted to believe that God's will never will be done on earth, judging from our own experience.

I do not know how God's will may make itself known to you, but I do know that there are times when I am as conscious of the pressure of God's way upon me as though His will were written across the vault of heaven. And I do know many saintly souls who live from day to day with conscious certainty that God's will will make itself known to them.

The fact is we generally know well enough what God would have us do in most situations. We know what His will is more times than we desire to follow it. How many times have we said or heard said, "I know what I ought to do, but—" or "I know I shouldn't do this, but—" So long as we feel that way about God's will for our lives, we never can pray, "Thy will be done," for as someone has written, "Prayer is the soul's sincere desire, uttered or unexpressed." And how well Jesus' life squares with that! It was he who said, "My meat is to do the will of Him who sent me."

There is one more question which frequently presents itself to the mind of a man unaccustomed to thinking of God's will in relation to his own life, and that is this, "If I submit to the will of God, if I pray, 'not my will but thine be done', doesn't that destroy much of my individuality and my personality?"

Browning says:

> God, thou art mind, unto the master mind
> Mind should be precious. Spare my mind alone!
> See thou to it! But if my spirit fail,
> My once proud spirit forsake me at the last,
> Hast Thou done well by me? So do not Thou!
> Crush not my mind, Dear God, though I be crushed.

There is something strangely appealing in such an attitude, much the same as is expressed in Henley's "Invictus":

> In the fell clutch of circumstance
> I have not winced nor cried aloud.
> Under the bludgeonings of chance
> My head is bloody but unbowed.

Here is a man who was saying, "I'm glad I've never said to any man or God, 'Not my will, but thine be done'."

But before I give myself over to such a philosophy, before I condemn Jesus' prayer in Gethsemane as that of a weakling, let me draw just two allusions. As I drive North this summer, I shall in all probability pay close attention to maps and road signs. I am a free moral agent, my car is paid for and I can take it where I please. I can be my own guide if I like. I can take off across the mountains on any trail of my choice. But experience and good sense have told me that if I expect to travel unknown roads, I'd better have a guide that knows the road, and that I had better submit to that guide for the sake of my own freedom.

Aviators crossing the mountains or flying in a fog I am told, follow a directional radio beam and by the sound of the humming in their ear phones they can tell the course of their direction. Now there is nothing compulsory about that radio beam. An aviator may fly clear off the beam if he likes. Some of them have done it and have met with disaster.

Jesus might have escaped the cross. He might have stayed out of Gethsemane. He might have gone to Galilee instead where he would have lived and died in oblivion, but Jesus knew the freedom and joy which came from following God's will even to a cross. That's what he was talking about when, on his way to Jerusalem and his death, he said, "I am come that my joy might be in you and that your joy might be full."

That is why he taught his disciples to pray, saying, "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

Let us pray, in the words of Charles Wesley:

> Lord, that I may learn of Thee,
> Give me true simplicity;
> Wean my soul and keep it low,
> Willing Thee alone to know.
>
> Let me cast my reeds aside,
> All that feeds my knowing pride,
> Not to man, but God submit,
> Lay my reasonings at Thy feet.
>
> —Amen.

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

Jesus Calls to Prayer.

LESSON: Luke 18. Print Luke 18:1-14.
GOLDEN TEXT: "Lord, teach us to pray." Luke 11:1.
DEVOTIONAL READING: Isaiah 62:1-7.
INTER. & SR. TOPIC: Learning to Pray.
Y. P. & ADULTS: Prevailing Prayer.

One of the prominent characteristics of the Oriental is his habit of imploring in season and out of season. If this unjust judge granted the plea because of the persistence of this widow, and against his own inclination, how much more will our Heavenly Father hear our plea, being as He is of tender and responsive heart, knowing our need.

It is this very persistence in petitioning the Father of all men, which has given mankind the lofty Psalms and tender prayers of our Scriptures. In the parable Jesus recommends to His disciples the insistence of the widow as a means to draw the benediction of Heaven upon them and to secure for them justification at the hands of Him who is the Righteous Judge. Honest seekers after spiritual gifts should not be averse to imitating this Oriental trait. We must be willing to storm the Gates of Heaven with prayer.

In the second section of the lesson regarding the Pharisee and the Publican three contrasts are evident—a contrast of men, a contrast of prayers, and a contrast of results. The Publican was humble and sincere. The Pharisee was self-congratulatory and vain. The man who has seen the King is not garrulous and the individual who has glimpsed perfection in Christ is not self-congratulatory. The word "I" occurs repeatedly in the speech of the Pharisee. The Publican beats upon his breast in consciousness of his own desperate sinfulness and unutterable need. The Publican stood afar off but God brought him near by hearing his prayer. The Publican would not venture to lift up his eyes to Heaven but God looked down from Heaven upon him and lifted up upon him the light of His countenance. Penitence is the latchkey to Heaven.

EVENING SERMON

THEME: ***The Three Jewels.***

SAMUEL HARKNESS, D. D.

TEXTS: "Be still and know that I am God." Psalm 46:10.
"I am the first and I am the last." Isaiah 44:6-8.

What I tell you surely began as a dream, and I only tell it now because it seems to be everyman's story. I thought I was young again—there was a strength and eagerness in me that overflowed every experience like a stream too great for its channel, and I had not known the meaning of fear and sorrow. Confident and jaunty, I came into a room fashioned of rough stones and heavy timbers. The walls were lined with shelves upon which were books, some thick and some thin; light came from tall, mullioned

windows; and a huge scythe stood in a corner. In the center of the room sat an old man with a long, white beard. He said, "I have a present for you," and my heart leaped with anticipation. Slowly, he placed before me three jewels, much the same in size and color. "These are yours," he continued. "Their names are the Past, the Present, and the Future. You will observe that when I place them closely together, they shine very brightly, but when I separate them, they grow dim and look very ordinary." "Why is that?" I asked. "You must find out," he answered. "Is it important?" I asked again. "You must determine that also," he replied. I realized that he was through with me, even wished me gone, so I went away. Presently, I returned to my home and hid the jewels in a dresser drawer. Strangely, I did not look at them for a long while, for I had not understood what Father Time had said.

I became interested in history. I brought imagination to it.

I saw the cave man fondle his club and furrow his brow as he watched a log floating in a stream, and I knew that navigation was born; later, I saw the ideas of the wheel and the sail break as flashes of lightning upon the human mind. I knew the goodly knights and fair ladies of King Arthur's court, the cunning work of medieval craftsmen, the glorious paintings of the Renaissance, the bursting of the gates of distance by the explorers. Romance and chivalry were as the breath of life to me. Because I was not discriminating and did not look beneath the surface to the tyranny of the feudal barons, the horror of incessant war, the waste of life through disease and superstition, I was the whole-hearted captive of the past. The people of my own day were uninspiring by contrast. They were sober of thought and restrained of manner, engaged with the drab stuff of duty and indifferent to excitement. I said to them bitterly, "The great days are all behind us," and could not understand why they smiled pityingly at me. Finally, I realized that there are some dull periods in history and resigned myself to the conviction that I had been born in one of them. Then, by chance, I came upon the three jewels in the dresser drawer. I thought I had left them lying closely together but, strangely, they were separated and dull. Almost unconsciously, I moved them toward each other and they began to glow.

Then, perhaps, because I had a very small place in the present, I began to live in the future, where by some miracle or heroic deed I had become a potent and influential figure.

The scene was now spread through green and flower-spangled meadows and far-reaching, graceful woods; occasionally, it would change to shining cities with monumental buildings through which unceasing currents of human activity poured. The people always seemed to have sunlight upon their faces and laughter upon their lips. I saw myself moving through this exhilarating scene, speaking to the children of men with words that were leaping flames of eloquence, and I walked always with the great. This obsession of the future, as alone important, grew upon me until what I had to do in the present seemed trivial; I did it with impatience, nor was it well-done. Sometimes, I had the uneasy sense that people were looking at me as though they had expected something more and better from me. But soon, I could shake off this sense of unease and be where I belonged, in the future. Then, by chance, I happened to look in the dresser drawer again and, strangely, the jewels were moved away from each other and dull. Angrily, I thought someone had tampered with them, but reflected that this could not be. Thoughtfully, I moved them together again.

Then, things began to happen that fixed all my attention upon the present.

Savage forces flowed, like lava, from the hearts of men. The glitter and thunder of murderous weapons could be seen and heard everywhere. The Four Horsemen of the

Apocalypse—famine, pestilence, war, and death—began to ride the earth under a dark and troubled sky. Wealth was destroyed, faith was gone, bereavement was common. The clear, rich pattern of life became a tangled maze, and self-determining creatures were puppets dangled from the hand of fate. The present was a torture to me, yet I could not escape from it, for now I looked upon the past with contempt—with the unflinching gaze of disillusionment I saw all along its dark furrows the sprouting seeds of tragedy come to harvest in the present. Likewise, the future was a torture because I saw it barren of freedom and faith, those moving into it compelled to a way of life in which the choices of the individual had narrowed to one—obey or die. Recoiling from both past and future, I lived in a present that more and more assumed the dreary outlines of a prison, from which there would be no parole or pardon. Once more, quite by chance, I looked in the dresser drawer and, strangely, the jewels were separated and dull.

"What can be the meaning of this?" I asked. Going out upon the roads of present experience once more, I saw the growing agony in the faces of men, felt the mounting fear in their hearts. I heard a voice coming over the seas, "I give you blood, toil, tears, and sweat." Was that all that could be said to men and women in the present? Had I stood upon a smoke-drifted field in Belgium with a rifle in my hand, watching a tank weaving and pitching toward me like some pre-historic monster, I might have thought so, but through a sequence of circumstances I lived far away and so could remember the incredible salvations of the past—how democracy has persisted despite the treacheries and stupidities of men, how those who have thought of themselves as the agents of imperial destiny became the pygmies of history, and how those who obey the will of God are never finally defeated. From the past, I turned to the future. I felt a new sanity and a new strength, a new desire to justify the good in the past and amplify it for the future. Again, this time deliberately, I opened the dresser drawer and saw the three jewels lying closely together and shining gloriously. Lovingly, I took them into my hand and looked at them touching each other.

Once more, I went to the house of Father Time. I stood before him. I noticed that another shelf had been filled with bulging volumes—much had happened since last I stood in this room. I was no longer young, and I had known fear and sorrow. I gestured toward the shelf and said, "I suppose that is the record of the present; I hope you are an accurate and dispassionate scribe." He smiled. "The Recording Angel occupies this room with me, he keeps the books." Looking at me intently, he put the question I had come to answer: "You have discovered why the jewels have to be kept together?" "Yes," I replied, holding them toward him in my open hand, "see how they shine?" He did not comment, only looked at me more searchingly. I went on, putting an old worry into words, "Life is a jig-saw puzzle, and the pieces are scattered. What troubles me is that life never quite comes up to my imagination of it—these jewels do not shine as brightly as I want them to, even now." I waited for him to speak. The room was very quiet. I was half-minded to leave when, finally, he spoke: "The footsteps of the Infinite are upon all the events chronicled in these books; they have been made in glory and agony. Life is no longer an unsolved puzzle when you remember that. Faith—your faith—communicates the splendor that belongs to it." It was then that the jewels in my hand began to shine more brightly than the gleam of water in the sun, but not more brightly than

the hope in my heart, for I knew I should find the footsteps of the Infinite upon all the misted tracks of the future.

(This sermon in story form was preached by Dr. Harkness and originated in the reflection that "not without parables spake he unto them.")

MID-WEEK SERMON

THEME: ***The Deepest Thing in Human Nature.***

TEXT: Romans 7:21.

Lady Macbeth sleepwalking, her conscience tortured by the murder of Duncan. Her husband, sharing both her distress and guilt, cried out to the doctor: "Canst thou not minister to a mind diseased, Pluck from the memory a rooted sorrow, Cleanse the stuffed bosom of that perilous stuff Which weighs upon the heart?" The wise doctor answers: "Therein the patient must minister to himself. More needs she the divine, than the physician."

The Reality of Sin: Sin is far more than a theological doctrine; it is a fact of human life. Henry Drummond lectured to the students of Edinburgh University. His first lecture was "Evolution and Religion" and the second was "Evolution and Christianity." He began the third saying, "In the first two lectures I have tried to appeal to your reason. Tonight I would like to say a few words on the deepest thing in human nature—that which is called in theological language SIN." "We believe that the sin of man was no part of the purpose of God; yet that all men are sinful, and that each of us has been guilty of wilful and repeated sin. We acknowledge that sin separates men from God, and brings them under his condemnation and punishment; and that without his forgiveness and his patient and mighty help no man can deliver himself from either the guilt or the power of his sin."

Our Common Sinfulness: Alexander Whyte said to his congregation, "I will give you the name of the greatest sinner in Edinburgh. It is Alexander Whyte!"

Our Common Sin: War. Inter-racial strife. Social injustice. Christ was made sin for us! We need to realize our share in the sin of the world. Only so do we become our brother's keeper.

The Separations of Sin: Judas going out into the night. Never again was he with the band. Never again in Christ's presence. In Eden: "Hid themselves!"

The Only Deliverance: Basically our sin is against God. Our settlement must be with God. God's mercy is revealed in Christ. Our only return to God is through Christ.

TOPICS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE'S SOCIETIES

CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR: Y. P.—Justice. Micah 6:8. Isa. 56:1-2. Col. 4:1. Matt. 5:38-42.
Jr.—Dependability. Matt. 5:33-37. Col. 4:6. Jas. 5:12.
LUTHER LEAGUE: Sr.—A Good Lent. Isa. 58:5-12.
Y. P.—Same.
Inter.—Missions in India. Acts 16:8-13.

MARCH, FIRST SUNDAY

CALL TO WORSHIP: "We have thought on Thy loving kindness, O God, in the midst of Thy temple. As is Thy name, O God, so is Thy praise unto the ends of the earth."
PSALM: 139.
PRELUDE: Bell Offertoire—*Batiste.*
ANTHEM: The Lord is My Shepherd—*Norden.*
OFFERTORY: Lullaby—*Brahms.*
POSTLUDE: March Solennelle—*Callaerts.*
OFFERTORY SENTENCE: "Surely every man at his best estate is altogether vanity . . . He heapeth up riches and knoweth not who shall gather them." Ps. 39:5-6.
OFFERTORY PRAYER: Almighty God, we join Thee in an effort to make all the people glad. Thy gift of Thy Son, Jesus Christ, is the perfect gift, and a challenge unto all the earth. We beseech Thee to take our gift into Thy keeping, and use it as Thy wisdom dictates. We praise Thee in all humility, we bow to Thy great love, and place ourselves in Thy keeping.
BENEDICTION: The kingdom of the world is become the Kingdom of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He shall reign forever and ever.

SERMONS

THEME: ***The Open Door.***

CLARENCE EDWARD MACARTNEY, D. D.

TEXT: "Behold, I have set before thee an open door." Rev. 3:8.
HYMNS: "Open Now Thy Gates of Beauty."—*Neander,* 87, 87, 77.
"There's a Wideness in God's Mercy."—*Falfield,* 87, 87, *D.*

I. Philadelphia Then and Now.

When William Penn wished to give a name to the town that he had founded on the banks of the Delaware, he called it Philadelphia, the city of brotherly love. But long centuries before, as long as 40 B.C., the King of Pergamos, Attalus, because of the love he had for his brother called, Philadelphus, founded a city at the foot of the Taurus mountains and called it *Philadelphia.*

Having once seen Philadelphia, one will never forget it. Our first view of the city was as we approached the mountains from the north. We had driven from Smyrna to Sardis, with its two lonely but majestic columns, and then far eastward, following the Hermus River, and then south towards the mountains. Presently, close up against the mountains, we saw the minarets of the mosques appearing above the treetops, and by this sign knew that we were coming to ancient Philadelphia. The city lies on the great highway which of old connected Rome with the east, the road which led from Troas to Pergamos, and thence to Sardis, from Sardis to Philadelphia, from Philadelphia over the mountains to Laodicea, and from Laodicea by the pass in the mountains known as the Cilician Gates into Syria. On the other side of the mountains from Philadelphia, that is, to the south, is the valley of the Lycus River and the Meander River, where once were the populous towns of Colossae, Laodicea, and Hierapolis, and, where the Meander flows into the Aegean, Miletus, where Paul said farewell to the elders at the church at Ephesus. Directly against this rampart of mountains, and at the foot of Mt. Tmolus, lies Philadelphia.

Of all the Seven Churches, Philadelphia was one of the last to have its candlestick of worship put out. In the eloquent language of Gibbon in his "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire:"

"The captivity of ruin of the Seven Churches of Asia was consummated, and the barbarous lords of Ionia and Lydia still trample on the monuments of classic and Christian antiquity. In the loss of Ephesus the Christians deplored the fall of the first angel, the extinction of the first candlestick of the Revelations; the desolation is complete, and the Temple of Diana or the Church of Mary will equally elude the search of the curious traveller. The circus and three stately theaters of Laodicea are now peopled with wolves and foxes. Sardis is reduced to a miserable village . The God of Mahomet, without a rival or a son, is evoked in the mosques of Thyatira and Pergamos; and the populousness of Symrna is supported by the foreign trade of the Franks and Armenians. Philadelphia alone has been saved, by prophecy, or courage. At a distance from the sea, forgotten by the emperors, encompassed on all sides by the Turks, her valiant citizens defended their religion and capitulated to the proudest of the Ottomans. Among the Greek colonies and churches of Asia, Philadelphia is still erect, a column in a scene of ruins, a pleasing example that the paths of honor and safety may sometimes be the same."

But today Philadelphia has shared the fate of the other Seven Churches, and the pillar of its faith has fallen. All that one sees today is a mean sun-baked Turkish village, where you seek in vain to escape from the burning heat, until you come upon one of the beautiful and gracious plane trees which are the glory of Asia Minor. It was such a tree that the Persian despot, Xerxes, on his way to the conquest of Sardis, decorated with silver and gold as a token of gratitude for its coolness and shade. Today, over the miserable town and crumbling ruins rise the always graceful minarets of the Moslem Mosques. Here and there, we saw lonely pillars and columns, on the top of which were the huge nests of the storks, with those weird and melancholy birds standing and drumming over them. As we walked down one of the streets we heard the neighing of a horse, and passing under a noble archway discerned in the dim light stalls for horses. Where the great and illustrious, the kings and queens and conquerors of yesterday, once revelled in splendor, now are fed and bedded the horses of the Moslems. So passes the glory of this world.

II. The Letter to Philadelphia.

In this now miserable and wretched town there once flourished a true and faithful church of Christ. The Church of Philadelphia has disappeared and the splendid city of Philadelphus, or Attalus, has long vanished. But what John wrote to the Church at Philadelphia still lives. Philadelphia has a proud place among the Seven Churches in that it is a church to which no single word of blame or censure is spoken. It is a church which has kept the Word of Christ and has not denied His name. Because of its fidelity Christ rewards it with three great promises. One is that He will keep it in the hour of trial and temptation which is to come upon all the earth. The second promise is that the faithful Christian of Philadelphia will be made a pillar in the Temple of God, and Christ will write the Name of God and His own New Name upon him. Looking upon the beautiful pillars still standing at Philadelphia, we thought of that ancient promise. But the third promise is the most wonderful of all. It is the promise of the open door. "Behold I have set before thee an open door and no man can shut it." It is that promise more than anything else which has made Philadelphia immortal.

I. The Door of Refuge and Escape.

There are two important things about a door,—what it leads into and what it leads away from. This door that Christ said He had opened for faithful believers at Philadelphia is, first of all, a door of refuge and escape from the dangers of trial and temptation. That is made clear from the other promise: "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience. I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation which shall come upon all the world to try them that dwell upon the earth."

Life has many difficulties, dangers, and trials; but in Christ there is opened a door of refuge and escape. Walking down the mean and narrow streets of Philadelphia with that promise in your mind, it is not difficult to imagine a man pursued by robbers or murderers running down the street, and as he runs looking eagerly to the left and to the right to see if anywhere there is an open door through which he can run and find safety. It will go hard with him if no door is open. Door after door is closed fast against him, but here at length he sees an open door, rushes through it, closes the door after him, locks it and bars it, and is safe from his pursuers. In Christ always there is an open door of escape, no matter what the temptation is.

The power of temptation as a layer-in-wait for, and a pursuer and enemy of, the soul of man is attested to by the number of victims which strew the highways of life. Temptation likes to get hold on youth above all others, and cancel its moral future and win for evil its energies and enthusiasm. What Christ said to Peter is true especially of youth—"Satan hath desired to have you that he may sift you as wheat." That means that he would separate you from all your good resolves and purposes and high principles. But for all there is opened a door of escape, whether at ancient Philadelphia or in modern Pittsburgh. No matter what the temptation may be, an old temptation, a besetting sin with which you have fought many a battle and perhaps many a losing battle, or some new unexpected temptation that has suddenly threatened you and now pursues you. No matter what the temptation is, the door of escape is open. "God who is faithful will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able, but will with the temptation afford a way of escape that ye may be able to bear it." There are certain signs that point one to the door of escape, the exit from the theater of temptation: one is the Bible, another is prayer. How true is that verse from the old hymn—

> "And oft escaped the tempter's snare,
> By thy return, Sweet Hour of Prayer."

II. The Door of Repentance.

How golden is the light which falls upon that door of repentance! The very call to repentance reveals mercy and goodness on the part of God. What if you and I had been created with the power to choose evil, but not with the power to repent of our sins? What if God let us wander from Him, but never called us back to Him? What if Peter, when he went out into the night and wept bitterly, after he had denied his Lord, had never been able to come back to Christ and hear Him say, "Peter, feed my sheep?" But the infinite goodness of God is revealed in the fact that he calls us to repent, and that the door of repentance is ever open. When a soul has scorned the door of safety and escape from temptation, and has fallen a victim to sin, then

God in His mercy opens this other door that we call repentance. Nature, experience, and time, and human reasoning, all close and bar the door to repentance after transgression. What is done, they say, is done. The only verse they know is "The wages of sin is death." "Whatsoever a man soweth that also shall he reap." But the infinite love of God opens another door. What fact could be more beautiful, more solemn, for a soul that has sinned than what Christ says here, "Behold, I set before thee an open door." No matter what the past has been, no matter what the record of yesterday, God opens the door to a new day and puts an unblotted page in our hand.

The prodigal wandered in a far country and sunk himself in sin, but when he came to himself and travelled the long hard journey homeward, he found that the door of his father's house was wide open for his return. It had never been closed. God throws the door of repentance open and no man can ever close it, save the sinner himself. Years ago, a young man who had forsaken his father's home and the godly training of that home and wandered in far lands, both geographical and moral, returned to San Francisco, where his home had been. He felt ashamed to go to the town and the house on the Bay where his father lived. But in the evening, when night had come down, he hired a boat and rowed over towards the point of land where his home was. As he sat in the boat peering through the gathering gloom, he saw his father come to the window and put a light in it. Every night his father put that light there so that it might welcome his son home again. God has put a light in the window of heaven and nothing can ever put it out.

III. The Door of Opportunity and Hope.

There is nothing more stirring and pleasant than to feel that life has good things ahead of you, that no matter what yesterday has been, how foolish or how hard, there is something brighter ahead tomorrow. On the other hand, there is nothing more depressing, more unnerving, than to feel that life holds nothing in store for you. "Is life over for me?" was the question that one who had grown weary by the way asked of a friend and counsellor. The great answer is found in that immortal promise to the church at Philadelphia. Life is never over for those who follow Jesus Christ. "Behold, I set before thee an open door."

This is grandly true, first of all of youth, of those here tonight who are in the early morning of life. You have the incomparable chance of youth, you have the opportunity to learn now the way of life, to learn life's great purposes, to learn how to do good. The door is wide open now. Five years from now it will be a little less wide open. In middle life it will be half shut. A little later on it will be three-quarters shut; and then, at length, so far as the opportunity to be good and do good in this world, the door will be closed. Therefore, enter it now. Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth. Work, for the night cometh!

But this is a promise of opportunity which speaks not only to youth, but to those in every period of life. It has a great meaning for those who are conscious of the mistakes and the omissions and the neglect of the past. Even the most thoughtful and careful will recall doors which they passed by, opportunities to speak for God and the truth, to warn someone in peril, to encourage and help a troubled soul. But God opens another door. He gives us another chance.

Peter had a great opportunity to stand by Jesus on the night on which he was betrayed. But he failed miserably, and, in spite of a special warning, and his own boastings, denied that he ever knew Jesus. But Christ opened another door for Peter and sent him out to feed his sheep. There is always a note like that of a trumpet to me in that verse about Jonah, "The word of the Lord came unto Jonah the second time." The first time he failed miserably and fled from the face of the Lord, but God gave him the second chance. The word of the Lord came unto him the second time, and this time he obeyed it.

There are those, too, who feel that life has been so circumscribed for them that they have not done the good they would like to have done. There are those who feel that they had but little chance or little opportunity to make their lives count. But always in Christ there is a door open. It may open into a chamber of patience or trial and endurance and courage. If so, that is what God wants you to do. And sometimes, in chambers like that, the highest record of usefulness and of influence is written.

As a boy I used to like to read that story of Ali-Baba and the Forty Thieves, and how the man who had the mystic word, "Open sesame," got into the cavern filled with treasure, and then from one door to another and from one chamber to another. So the open door that Christ sets before us leads to other doors and to higher chambers of usefulness. The open door of Philadelphia was a reward to those who had been faithful. When we obey God and open the door that He sets before us, then He will open another door unto us.

Christ opens the door, points you to it, invites you to go in. But He never pushes you, never compels you. You alone are the one who can decide whether you will enter that door or not.

The door is open now. But one day that door closes. Your own disobedience, your own refusal your own delay can close it. It is a striking and interesting fact that this last message of Jesus to His Church deals with an open door, "Behold, I set before thee an open door;" and that almost the last saying of Jesus before He was crucified has to do with a door that was opened and then was closed.

When the foolish virgins came late to the door of the bridegroom's house, Christ said, "And the door was shut." Here, then, are two statements of Jesus. What could be more stirring and moving than this, "I have set before thee an open door"? And what could be more solemn, what could be more sad than that other saying, "And the door was shut"? Oh, while the door is open, for some here tonight so wide open, enter into the joy of Thy Lord!

First Sunday in Lent (Invocavit).

THEME: *The Dependence of Man.*

FRANCIS C. VIELE, D. D.

TEXT: ". . . it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." Jer. 10:23.
HYMNS: "God of Our Fathers . . ."—*National Hymn,* 10 10, 10 10.
"May We Thy Precepts, Lord, Fulfil."—*Meribah,* 886, D.

The Bible abounds with personal experiences which have ever been the dependable source of the world's moral and spiritual enlightenment. And the text is especially worthy of being listed in the category of individual conviction.

If the prophet had said that man had never been known to direct his course in life, it would be a popular subject for controversial treatment. But this was not the governing thought of the prophet's assertion. He knew men who had spent their lives trying to shape their careers with nothing more trustworthy than the dictates of their native judgment, and every instance that had come within the range of his observation had ended in failure. He is therefore, presenting the subject of man's dependence upon God for everything that is needed in the effort to exemplify the ideals of right living.

Man is destined to go wrong when he trusts his own opinions for moral and religious direction. But he will not fail of ultimate success if he adopts the revealed will of God as the authority for his life's work. The qualities of action with which his life will be crowned, may not conform to the ideas of some men, but he will be an example of the thought expressed in the language of Daniel's prophecy: "The people who know their God shall be strong, and do exploits."

In the language of the text the prophet is telling what he knows. He is making use of the knowledge he has gathered during the years that have marked the length of his prophetic career. He is unlike the philosopher who presses on his way speculatively hoping to find something that will confirm his beliefs in the accommodating light of reason. The prophet is here speaking with unwavering confidence and authority which cannot be ignored. He does not give the impression that he is groping his way trying to find evidence to use in supporting something that he desires to believe. He has no theory to develop, or an imaginative idea which he desires to honor with the appearances of reality. None of these things can be used to describe the prophet's attitude toward life in general and his people in particular. He puts the emphasis where it belongs by making experience take the place of argument, which cannot be weakened but strengthened by the passing of time. Men's changing viewpoints of life do not effect its meaning. It stands as a memorial to the vital faith of every age. That which was declared true in the days of Jeremiah is confirmed by life's ever-enlarging sphere of knowledge. And everything that leads toward a larger understanding of God is conducive to a growing appreciation of time and its essential relation to eternity.

It is important, however, to remember that the prophet does not mean that man is circumscribed in the exercise of his powers of action. As a free moral agent, man may do whatever his desires suggest, and this has been the cause of all the trouble that has obstructed the paths of life. While man is free to abuse his powers of expression, he does not have the right to do wrong. There always have been great differences of opinion among men in drawing the line between right and wrong. For this reason it is the imperative obligation of man to shape his conduct in harmony with the law of God, which is designed to contribute everything that is essential to the largest possible development of his earthly well being.

In these days of popular forms of careless thinking, the conscience is given a large place in our lines of reasoning. We are told that we cannot go far wrong if the dictates of conscience are obeyed. But all this depends upon the condition of the conscience. It is easy for some people to justify themselves in anything they do. To follow the dictates of a conscience like that is a dangerous habit. Only the man whose life is blessed with the approval of God and honored with the confidence of all who know him best, has a conscience that is a safe guide in all matters of belief and conduct.

All that needs to be done to appreciate the reliability of what the prophet says about the inability of man to save himself, is to note the trend of those who refuse to follow the divinely conceived plan of action. There is nothing intricate in anything that has to be done to determine the value of man-made rules of life. But this contradicts the judgment of all who have nothing to do with life's divinely appointed tasks. The man who is unwilling to recognize the spiritual laws that are intended to increase the number of his years of usefulness and enjoyment in this life, is opening the way for the growth of conditions which will prove to be the breeding-ground for all manner of unwelcome experiences.

The prophet, is not, in these words, speaking unworthily of the endowments of human nature. By nature, man has possibilities that cannot be appraised by what is known about the other types of life. But the text suggests goals of attainment which cannot be reached by man independent of that which is unlimited in the essential range of its reality. It is not what man can do for himself that represents the highest forms of his nature, but it is what he can do and what he can become when working in harmony with the directing laws of God. This gives man a standing amid the varied ways of life that is not possible with the members of the animal kingdom which do not bear the image of their Creator.

The interest of some people in something different, no matter what line of thought may be described, is often the leading quality of their lives. But the plan of religion which is based upon man's relation to God, is a subject with which they disagree in all the phases of its doctrinal ideals. According to their claims, it needs to be revised before we can reasonably expect it to become the universally accepted hope of the world. But it is not for man to say what he shall accept or reject when his eternal interests are at stake. Man had nothing to do with making the plan that has been known to the world for more than nineteen centuries. But this offers barriers to those who are not satisfied to take the gospel as it is. This is nothing new, as the same disposition has led men in all the centuries of Christian history to protest against the labors of all who have been interested in promoting the cause of Christ. They are seldom known to assume an attitude of enmity toward any of the other moral movements of life. Their specialty seems to be opposition to Christian doctrine and its world-wide sponsorship of the church.

The messages of the old prophets were no more popular with many people of their day than is true of those who stress the need of righteousness in our day. There were those in the earlier years of life's history who considered themselves capable of conserving their religious interests without recognizing the authority of prophetic announcements. It was this spirit of self-righteousness that caused Jeremiah to become one of the broken-hearted men of his time. And later prophets of God who have unfurled "The banner of the Cross" on many fields of consecrated service have experienced similar disappointments and sorrow. There are great multitudes of people who think they need to do nothing but follow their own inclinations in all things pertaining to their religious needs. The gospel does not appeal to such people because they consider its doctrinal standards too exacting to meet the needs of this generation which has made so much of personal liberty. But the rejection of the plan for Christian living does not dispose of the issue relating to man's religious needs. And the oftener man spurns the offer of the abun-

dant life in Christ, more emphatic eminence is given the consistency of the old prophet's words: "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps."

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

The Authority of Christ.

LESSON: Luke 19:1—20:8. Print Luke 19:41—20:8.
GOLDEN TEXT: "Why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" Luke 6:46.
DEVOTIONAL READING: Matthew 7:21-29.
INTER. & SR. TOPIC: Accepting Christ as My Master.
Y. P. & ADULTS: The Authority of Christ.

The teacher should emphasize to the class the fact that Christ's was a Master mind. These scribes and Pharisees were past masters at debate and sharp, cunning questions. Every time they engaged Jesus, however, they came off worsted in the contest. It was so in this case. After they had consulted together they gave the ignominious reply, "We do not know." "Then," answered Jesus, "if you cannot decide in regard to the authority of My predecessor and herald I will not allow you to pass upon My authority." This put an end to their examination of the Master and in confusion they withdrew. They were, however, more determined than ever to put Him out of the way.

The teacher should point out that in Jesus' reply He actually answered their question. He definitely implied that the authority of John was divine and that His own authority was likewise divine. They were afraid to deny the divine authority of John and they were also powerless to deny that of Jesus. Jesus further implied that if they had accepted the message of John they would have been prepared to accept His. People who are afraid to accept the logical conclusions of their doubts and denials can never hope to discover truth.

The reply which Jesus gave to them, moreover, laid bare their hypocrisy both to themselves and to their enemies. When they said they did not know about John Jesus knew and they knew and the crowd knew that they were not honest. The question of Jesus had made it perfectly clear that the real issue at stake was not authority but obedience. Obedience to His will is the path to knowledge. "He that willeth to do My will shall know the doctrine."

EVENING SERMON

THEME: ***Facing Life.***

MARTIN PAUL LUTHER.

TEXT: Ruth 1:16.
HYMNS: "Jesus, Thou Joy of Loving Hearts."—*Germany.*
"Blest Be the Tie that Binds."—*St. Dennis, S. M.*

One cannot escape the awful fact that life is strange commingling of good and bad, love and hate, freedom and bondage, brightness and darkness. We

are constantly in 'a maddening maze of things and tossed by storm and flood.' There is no blessed isolation from the cares and tribulations of this world. Even as the 'Father sendeth rain on the just and the unjust' so the sorrows and blessings of life must be recognized and faced by us all.

The hero of a certain novel started out to look for happiness in life. He went from village to village, city to city, but he could not find it. Finally, as he sat down to think it over, the question came to him, "Is it possible that happiness has nothing to do with my circumstances but only with the way I *meet* them?

A man who knew life and grew wise once said "Greater is he that conquereth himself than he that taketh a city." Alexander is a well-known example of a world conqueror who because he did not know how to control himself never mastered circumstances.

The Old Testament story of Ruth who faced the issues of life squarely and successfully proves an inspiration to every reader. It is said that when Benjamin Franklin was ambassador to France he was entertained at dinner. The conversation centered about the short story. After a long and interesting discussion Franklin took from his pocket a little book and read this story. In amazement they asked where he found it. Franklin then explained that it came from the great Book of valuable experiences—the Bible. Indeed, what the story of Ruth has for us is this: "Let the stormy seasons come I will fortify myself to meet them. When the bright and peaceful days of pleasurable experience are mine to enjoy I will not be spoiled by them nor neglect the responsibility of my life. This shall be my victory—even my faith."

Let us be specific and realistic in our approach to life. What shall each of us face? For one thing, the sooner we each accept the idea of life as a struggle and prepare ourselves for it the sooner we shall advance in the building of our own characters.

The crying, struggling infant reveals the method of life-building. Permit the child to lie inert day after day and neither the body nor mind will develop. It is by way of effort—strenuous, glorious struggle that we acquire strength and ability. Mary Lyon was born in poverty. It is said that she felt at an early age the rough edges of life. But she had a way of forcing circumstances to serve the purpose of her spirit. She achieved by the most arduous labor a college education. When Mary Lyon founded Mt. Holyoke she gave expression to the force within her. She said to those assembled that the purpose of this school was "To help girls to face life more squarely." Day by day she labored to raise money for the buildings and necessary equipment. People said it couldn't be done, but Mary Lyon was sure that hard work would do it. Mt. Holyoke College is a monument to that spirit. One day a school friend asked, "How is it that the harder a thing is, the better you like it?" Mary Lyon replied, "It's lots more fun climbing than going along on the level. You feel so much more alive. I'll tell you what to do when a thing seems hard like a steep hill: say to yourself, 'some people call you difficulty, *old hill,* but I know your name is *opportunity*. You're here to prove that I can do something worthwhile.'"

Happy indeed is the man who recognizing that life has many a difficult struggle in store for him prepares to meet it bravely. Then too for each of us who take life seriously there will come periods of sorrow and keen disappointment.

Friends may prove unreliable and desert us. Loved ones become the victims of illness and are taken from us. The smooth course of our profession is interrupted by forces over which we have no control. Our abilities may not be as great as we supposed. We may find ourselves unequal to the responsibilities placed upon us. Sooner

or later we may face some or all of these conditions—and it will not be easy. What shall we do? So often these days we hear such disparaging remarks about the futility of Christianity. It becomes easy for us preachers to see only the worst. But one thing among many values of Christianity is the encouragement and revitalization that men get from their faith. How often we see a good Christian lose his dearest and closest friend and not become a victim of remorse and cynicism. It is a glorious thing to hear a Christian man say at the loss of his wife, "There will always be pain in my heart, but my Master says I have a task to perform. Life has yet much in store for me. Good friends are near to help. I have a glorious opportunity to be more helpful to others. My God has assured me that we shall be united again in an everlasting fellowship. Therefore I shall give the best account of myself and live as creatively as possible." Every minister hears that victorious message and sees its fulfillment—and it is the glorious answer of Christianity to the sorrows of mankind.

But what of the disappointments? Some one has recently written the story of a man whom all America honors. This young man at 22 years of age failed in business. Again in partnership with another business man he lost everything. His partner drank and gambled away profits and left debts. Instead of declaring bankruptcy the young man paid off all the accumulated debts. The girl he loved died. He had a physical breakdown. Ten years later a ray of sunshine pierced the gloom. This time in politics. He was elected to Congress. Again he failed and was not returned to Washington. Nine years later he was placed in line for nomination to the United States Senate only to be forced at the last moment to step aside in favor of another. Again he tried and failed. Now at the age of fifty he had been unable to achieve a single victory. Two years after this last defeat destiny with a master stroke atoned—Abraham Lincoln was elected President of the United States.

When we see the discouragement and the obstacles that some have overcome we stand ashamed of our self-pity. Then there is a resurgence of the spirit, of self-mastery that will enable us to meet life's disappointments squarely. What others have done, we too can do.

Now a measure of happiness will come our way. This too presents a problem. What will enrich our enjoyment of life? There are lesser and fleeting pleasures that soon pass away. I have been told that there is momentary joy in drunkenness—and I have been told that the after effects are not so pleasant. Certainly nobody in his right mind would call the joys of intoxication a major source of happiness. One must look very high for the basis of true happiness.

The fact remains that life itself is the greatest object of happiness. When Maude Royden, one of the truly great women preachers of this day, was a little girl they said of her that "she was in love with life." Look at Maude Royden when this was said of her. She was suffering from an ailment which would have kept most girls and boys not only on their backs, but would have made them peevish and disgruntled. For at birth both her hips were dislocated and lameness has been her lot ever since. Every day of her life has been dogged by pain. Instead of turning her mind to her disability she concentrated on what she could do with what life had given her. She found life enjoyable. She could swim and row a boat. She could read and think. She could admire and reverence beauty and truth. Life was so full of possibilities, so filled with glorious things that she determined to enjoy it. This she did by defeating self-pity and accepting the very best that God's gracious providence offered and used it for the more abundant life. Even so the Master opens the treasures of the more abundant life and freely offers them to us all.

Robert Louis Stevenson said, "The world is so full of a number of things I am sure we should be happy as kings." Stricken with nerve-wracking pain, seeking rest where he could not find it, denied much that we possess, he nevertheless found when he looked squarely at life so much of beauty, goodness and truth that his soul rejoiced.

MID-WEEK SERMON

THEME: ***The Meaning of Calvary.***

TEXT: Luke 23:33.

The crucifixion of Jesus of Nazareth. The death of him who is the focal point of our Christian faith: the One who, in the phrase he loved, is not only the Son of Man, humanity at its noblest, but also the very Son of the very God, "the image of the invisible God."

The Meaning of Calvary: "We believe that from the beginning God has been patiently seeking the redemption of his children, and that through prophet and psalmist he made clear that there is forgiveness with him. But we believe that his eternal purpose to redeem has been fully made known in Jesus Christ, in whom God himself came among men to seek and to save that which was lost, and that in the death of the Cross he has shown us the malignity of sin and his antagonism thereto, but, above all, his love in putting away sin by the sacrifice of himself. Therefore, with thankful devotion, we find in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ the assurance of God's forgiving grace, and learn that his holy love can only be satisfied with a holy life in those whom he forgives. We believe that we are received into sonship and peace with God, not because of any good works or holiness on our part, as though we could deserve so great salvation, but only and altogether because of his infinite mercy, freely granted to all who repent and turn from their sins, and accept Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord."

The Demands of Calvary: At the Cross we see God giving and also demanding. Face realities of our world. Call Sin by right name. Not merely that war is raging, but everything engendered by war—avarice, impurity, selfishness. World needs a spiritual awakening. When we recognize the fullness of the sacrifice of Christ; when we order our lives according to that sacrifice and example; when we close the gap between our lives and God, then we have accepted the Cross of Christ.

TOPICS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE'S SOCIETIES

CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR: Y. P.—A Study of the Trinity. "The Love of God." I John 4:7-11, 16.
Jr.—Good Workmanship. I Cor. 1:8. II Tim. 2:15.
LUTHER LEAGUE: Sr.—How Can I be Sure of God? John 7:17.
Y. P.—Same.
Inter.—How To Keep Lent. Isa. 58:5-12.
WALTHER LEAGUE: March Topic—Missions. Is there Need for Missions? Upon Whom Does the Responsibility Rest?

MARCH, SECOND SUNDAY

CALL TO WORSHIP: "I was glad when they said unto me, let us go unto the house of Jehovah."
PSALM: 130.
PRELUDE: Pilgrim's Song of Hope—*Batiste.*
ANTHEM: The Heavens Are Declaring—*Beethoven.*
OFFERTORY: Draw Me To Thee—*Nevin.*
POSTLUDE: Toccato—*Dubois.*
OFFERTORY SENTENCE: "For every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills. I know all the birds of the mountains; and the wild beasts of the field are mine. If I were hungry, I would not tell thee; for the world is mine and the fulness thereof."
OFFERTORY PRAYER: Through Thy all-consuming love for Thy children, Thou hast caused us to await Thy desires, and to delight in serving Thee. Our strength comes in recognizing our weaknesses and Thy forgiveness; in doing Thy bidding in humility, knowing that Thou wilt assign tasks in keeping with our accomplishments. Let our love for Thee increase as the days pass, so that we may grow near to Thee in Spirit.
BENEDICTION: The peace of God, which passeth understanding, keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

SERMONS

THEME: *By the Waters of Babylon.*

JOHN ANDREW HOLMES, D. D., L. H. D.

TEXT: Psalm 137:4.
HYMNS: "If God Himself Be For Me."—*St. Theadulph,* 76, 76, D.
"My Spirit on Thy Care."—*St. Michael, S. M.*

Nearly a thousand years before Christ, what was to become the Holy Land was still the land of Canaan, but the Hebrews were already invading Canaan. At some points they succeeded in dislodging the natives, but at other points they were held back, and what took place in the long run was an intermingling of the two races.

With this fusion of the Canaanites and the Israelites it long seemed that their religions also would merge, the pure monotheism brought from the desert making a place beneath its wings for the whole vicious brood of Baals, but the men who stand out in history as the prophets of Israel refused to make room for those gods. The new composite race, they vowed, must have no composite religion. So there was war to the death between the two faiths. Though at times the Lord God seemed about to come into his own, how often the dead old idols took on strange new life and power! Spasms of reform were succeeded by gross reactions, and after ten generations of conflict the war was not yet won.

"This people refuses to know me," Jeremiah of Anathoth hears Jehovah saying. "Therefore, behold, I will melt them and try them . . . I will make Jerusalem heaps, a dwelling-place for jackals, and I will make the cities of Judah a desolation, without inhabitant." That stern sentence was executed.

One can hardly imagine the depth of sorrow felt by the exiles as they tried to resume living amid scenes so distant and strange. No longer the dear old hills, but only a monotonous plain, which though fertile for the stomach was barren for the soul. They were homesick not alone for their mountains, but for the God whose home was those mountains. No more might they lift

their eyes to the hills whence came their strength. They had been removed from God's country, where God dwelt high and lifted up, and how could he follow them away from his country? The book of Jonah, with its epoch-making lesson that God is everywhere, lay far in the future, and Mt. Zion was still regarded as God's only habitation. Pining for the new-made ruins of his temple in Jerusalem, those Hebrews little dreamed of a house for him in Babylon.

This lesson they were destined to learn. But how could they sing Jehovah's song in a foreign land? And how deeply they craved to sing that song! Though in better days they had flouted God, now they demanded him above all else. The colorful Baals and the enticing immoralities for which the Baals stood—in this hour of their banishment these utterly failed to satisfy them. Instead of the old idolatries and vices they now longed for the old temple.

So others have found it in their times of trouble. The things they are accustomed to prize seem at such times mere baubles. They long for what they have scoffed at, for nothing else meets their deepest needs. Fortunately in those hours many of them are privileged to find God, but not so with those Hebrews. Alas, now that they craved him he seemed far from them. In the psalm from which we quote our text we find preserved for us a choice literary expression of their poignant sense of loss. Gaze at them beside the foreign canals:

> "By the rivers of Babylon,
> There we sat down, yea, we wept,
> When we remembered Zion.
> Upon the willows in the midst thereof
> We hanged up our harps . . .
> How shall we sing Jehovah's song
> In a foreign land?"

A strange notion, one says. How well we know that God is everywhere! Yes, we know it well enough. But when it comes to feeling it, how often we resemble those ancient exiles! And it is what we feel that is really our faith.

Consider the average American tourist—does he look for God abroad? Even in a neighboring village he would hardly expect to meet him. Yet his Pilgrim Fathers found him a thousand leagues from home. Harried forth from a hallowed land, they conducted their worship in a wilderness fort. On a coast which from the foundation of the earth had never known a communion table, theirs was the insight to see their God, and to whom was he ever more real than to them? We like to think of the Pilgrims as narrow, but at this point they were broader than we. In whatever surrounding our lot may be cast, we may well go in singing the songs of Zion, whose God sails all the seven seas of space.

Yet every minister knows many a man who once was a faithful worshipper of a local deity on some holy hill, but who when he changed his residence left his God back there. Somehow the new place of worship does not seem exactly like a church, especially if it belongs to a different denomination. We feel that God really belongs to the sect of our childhood. But actually churches are only so many knot-holes through which particular groups catch their glimpses of God. While we love our denominational knot-hole be-

cause of him it has helped us to see, we must cease to love the knot-holes more than we love God. Once it was my privilege to attend a Mohammedan service. It was in the ancient mosque of Sancta Sophia in far-away Instanbul, Turkey, but God was obviously present. Then surely it should be possible to find God in any Christian church, and in no community should God's work be crippled because men identify him with the respective shrines where they used to find him. If you unite with his church where you are going to live, fear not that the God of the old home church may resent it as disloyal to him.

Some college students who pride themselves on being modern are quite old-fashioned at this point. When I was a university pastor ministers used to tell me of their good church youths and maidens, who were always in the young people's meetings and faithful to the services of the sanctuary. "How well you must know Willie and Susie," these pastors would say, "because they are so faithful at church!" And I would make reply, "Yes, we have not glimpsed Willie or Susie." Coming to college, they had left their God back home. Though the Pilgrims had succeeded in bringing him across the vast and furious ocean, they had not got him across the brook outside their town. Like the primitive Hebrews in Babylon, they had left him where he belonged, localizing omnipresence. Theirs was the God of Chicago or Omaha, not of Urbana or Lincoln. God must now go his own way and they must lonesomely go theirs. "How should they sing Jehovah's song in a foreign land?"

Frequently, however, the trouble with young people is that they are entering the new land of maturity, where they feel that they have outgrown God. They think of him as a companion for children, for they have usually met him in the Sunday School, and now that they are so very old he has naturally lost his place beside them. They have newly learned so much that God would hardly know about! Back in the primary class God was all very well, but he should be kept in his place. To a sophisticated person, God is not intellectually stimulating! So they hang up the harps of the religion of their childhood and no longer are seen in their places at church.

Likewise many lose God on removing to the new country of riches. In the land of poverty they knew God well, but in the land of stocks and bonds he seems strangely out of place. And with a million dollars, what need has one of God? Why beg of God when one can order servants? In the bonanza days of the 1920's, how many harps were out of commission! In the 1930's, however, it was the willows of unemployment on which many hanged their harps. In that flat decade every pastor heard again and again, "When I was wealthy I attended worship, but at the border of the holy old land of prosperity I was forced to leave God because no longer had I money to give him."

For a throng sickness is a new land which God does not inhabit. For both soul and flesh the sick sorely need him,—sometimes faith might make them whole,—but they check their religion at the hospital door. While, conversely, others see God in the land of pain only. In order to see him more clearly in sickness, they abandon their old religion in favor of some bizarre new promotion of religion which lop-sidedly specializes in demonstrating the presence of God in the land of physical ailment, but when they regain the land of health they again become oblivious to God. There seems no way to keep

alive in them the sense of the presence of God except by keeping them miserable. When the physician affords them no hope they are glad to have the minister pray for them, but when recovery comes,—I have had amazing experiences of this,—they declare their inability to account for it, and you hear no more from them about prayer. They hang up their harps on the willows fringing the river of health, singing no more their song to Jehovah.

So is it with many new lands—for some the land of business, for some the land of new truth, for others the land of bereavement,—where it is assumed there is no temple, but no place is secular unless we make it so. In the very realms which we most completely dissociate from him God often does his most for us, and it was markedly so with those ancient people who had hanged up their harps by the waters of Babylon. When they assumed that God was confined to Jerusalem he was tremendously powerful in Babylon. There by the willows he performed a greater work for the soul of the people of Israel than ever he had succeeded in achieving back home.

For three centuries in Jerusalem they had clung to their idols, but in Babylon they surrendered them in three score years. When they returned to the Holy City they went there to worship Jehovah alone. The war on idolatry, whose first great battle had been won by the prophet Elijah on holy Mt. Carmel, was brought to a victorious conclusion out there by Babylon's secular waters.

When Jesus came to fulfil religion, he found no need to raise his voice against the once seemingly unconquerable Baal cult. On such a sandy foundation he hardly could have hoped to erect the towering structure of his spiritual gospel. So it was largely what God had effected in Babylon that made possible the founding of the Christian church. In the country where his people were least conscious of his presence God had wrought one of his most marvelous works.

So it may be in every land of our lives. How often God brings us out into strange new experiences where we seem cut off from him! But in these regions which we find it hardest to associate with his power what surprising feats he can do for us! In the very lands which seem completely shaded from the light of his countenance he may be able to do, if we permit him, as significant a work for our souls as he achieved for those songless Hebrews when their harps were hanged up on the willows.

Second Sunday in Lent (Reminiscere).

THEME: ***Creative Christian Convictions.***

HOBART D. MCKEEHAN, D. D.

TEXT: Mark 9:23.
HYMNS: "Teach me, My God and King."—*St. Andrews, S. M.*
"May we Thy Precepts, Lord, Fulfil."—*Meribah,* 886, D.

In a day in which the brave but bleeding hearts of good men beat fast and faster, not because of faith but because of fear, what is our supreme need as American Churchmen? My answer is that it is for great believers. It is for men who are utterly convinced about, and completely committed to, the truth and implications of the Christian revelation. The men who are destroying life and civilization in Western Europe are great believers, and they are

utterly committed. But it is to some form of religion, which may be evil and dangerous as well as holy, that they are committed. Christianity is not, primarily, a religion. Primarily, essentially, it is a revelation. God has spoken; God is speaking. He has made known, and He continues to make known, His divine intention, that is revelation and that is Christianity. It is to that, therefore, that I am appealing for your unhesitant faith and unconditional commitment.

To put it a bit differently, I would say that the hope of our world lies nowhere else than in great creative Christian convictions. There are convictions, and the fast growing cemeteries of Europe are their monument, by which millions of our fellow men have been, and are being, led to frustration and destruction. The goal toward which these de-Christianized and, therefore, de-humanized convictions must inevitably lead is death. But the goal toward which the convictions inherent in the Christian revelation leads is Life—full, free, creative and everlasting.

What are some of these creative convictions by which and for which Christ's men must live. I would mention five—five pillars in the living temple of spiritual wisdom.

I.

That no matter whatever lights fail, whatever landmarks and bulwarks fall in the midst of the dark and earthquake times in which we live, the light of God in Jesus Christ and His Church and the truth of His revelation will not fail or fall. Let us be convinced about that. It is altogether probable that the best of men will sometimes betray their highest ideals. It is not impossible for all men to be betrayed by what they consider their highest ideals. But it is utterly impossible for any man to be betrayed by the light and life and strength of Jesus Christ. We may betray Him but He will not betray us.

II.

That the clue to the meaning of history—world history, your history and mine,—is the Divine Intention, which was and is revealed in Christ. God has a plan, not for the universe only, not for world history only, but for each and every human life. It was Pindar, the Roman poet, who said, "find out what you are, and become it." But are we really trying to find out? We do not drive a new motor car for two hours without trying to discover the use of its smallest gadgets, yet some of us are content to live for decades without spending a single day seriously to wrestle with the all-important question, what is the meaning and purpose of my life? God has a plan for your life. You have a divine function to perform which nothing, and no one else in the world, can perform for you. Pause. Think. Pray. Listen to God. Discover the purpose of your life—your reason for being, as the French love to put it—and then believe and act in accordance with your discovery.

III.

That the way of sacrificial love, passionate but disinterested, is the way to personal, social and eternal success. Life is not a crib at which we feed,

grabbing for ourselves whatever is within reach and, if our position is advantageous, getting something more than our neighbors. Life is an altar; an altar to which we bring whatever we have and are; at which we surrender our sins and, in turn, receive the purgation of our souls and the emancipation of forgiveness, and before which we see and seek and share those ultimate insights and values which alone give life its beauty, significance, security and meaning.

To put it differently, a man has but two choices and he must choose one or the other. He may, accepting the temporal, the sensual and expedient, choose a living death, which is life without God. In this case the flame of life, however brilliant, will move by conflagration and, ultimately, die out in ashes. Or, on the contrary, a man may, like his Lord, choose a dying life, which is life lifted and transfigured by the Spirit of the living God. In this case the flame of life will burn steadily and with ever increasing warmth and beauty. Moreover, like the bush which Moses saw in the Midian desert, it will not be consumed.

If we choose to believe that life is a crib—which has been the motivating assumption of our Western world for generations—then he who gets most is a success and the Kingdom of Heaven is a satisfied physical appetite. In that case the house cat full of canaries, the capitalist clipping coupons or the communist satiated with caviar are equally successful. But if we believe that life is an altar, that the truly successful man is not Adolf Hitler, but Albert Schweitzer, then there is a door opening into the dawn because, with unearthly wisdom, we choose a dying life in preference to a living death.

IV.

That it is God's intention that man should be free. The freedom of man is not the creation of the State. The State, as such, can neither create nor bestow freedom. At best it can only provide the atmosphere and opportunity for free men. Freedom itself is the gift of God. Not by our "inalienable rights," as citizens of the state, but by our inexpungable nature as sons of God, are we free.

Seven hundred and twenty five years ago the emancipated consciences of our English-speaking ancestors compelled the unwilling and unsteady hand of King John to sign that seminal and immortal document, Magna Charta. America, standing in the line and light of that tradition of freedom, has given to the world two of the four essential pledges of man's liberty. The *Declaration of Independence* pledged his political liberty. The *Emancipation Proclamation* pledged his racial liberty and equality. And slowly the Christian conscience of North America has been drafting and composing a declaration of man's economic liberation.

But, believe me, the greatest of all emancipations remains to be realized. It is our emancipation from sin, guilt and death. And you, O men of God, have been chosen and called to learn and proclaim it. It's sign is a Cross and it's banner is an empty tomb.

V.

One by which all others are determined, is this: that you, as churchmen, are living cells within the mystical and supernatural body of Jesus Christ. You are more than members of a Christian organization. You are more than parts of a spiritual and civilizating institution. You are living cells, and the eyes and hands and feet of the Body of Christ. As such you are parts and partakers of a supernatural life which is manifested in the midst of mortal years. This does not mean that what the future holds in store for you will be either pleasant or easy; it does mean (if you are convinced and committed) that you can overcome the world. It means that you can be the fire-bringers, the life-changers, the love-creators and the music-makers in a world in which evil, darkness and death are enjoying tragic but not permanent success.

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

Christ Rejected.

LESSON: Luke 20:9—21:38. Print Luke 20:9-20.

GOLDEN TEXT: "Blessed are ye when men shall reproach you, and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake." Matt. 5:11.

DEVOTIONAL READING: II Timothy 2:3-13.

INTER. & SR. TOPIC: Taking Our Stand With Christ.

Y. P. & ADULTS: Taking Our Stand With Christ.

After our Lord had put His adversaries to confusion He spoke three condemnatory parables, that of the two sons, Matthew 21:28-32, that of the marriage of the king's son, Matthew 22:1-14, and that of the laborers in the vineyard which is alone recorded by Luke and which forms the text. The vineyard of the parable represents Palestine, the symbol of which on the coins of the Maccabean rulers were vines, grapes, and vine leaves. The owner of the vineyard was God who went away "for a long time." The servants whom He sent seeking fruit from His vineyard were the judges, the priests, that were true to Him and the prophets. Then God sent His beloved Son, whom the husbandmen killed, with the result that they were destroyed by the angry owner and the vineyard handed over to others. This is perhaps the saddest of the parables. The prophecy of the parable was fulfilled in every particular.

Scarcely a day passes without the addition of another heartbreaking chapter to the persecutions, the bloody suffering, the bitter grief, the horrible desolation, the unspeakable tragedy of the Jews in some part of the world. All of these happenings are the fulfillment of the words spoken so long ago by Christ and indeed of their own rash curse which they themselves called down upon themselves when they cried, "His blood be upon us and upon our children."

History has no more tragic chapter than this.

EVENING SERMON

THEME: ***Hidden Riches.***

W. J. McCULLOUGH, D. D.

TEXT: Isaiah 45:1-6.
HYMNS: "Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing."—*Nettleton,* 8, 7, D.
"When all Thy Mercies, O My Lord."—*Belmont, C. M.*

Introduction:

This earth is a great depository of hidden riches. Man has been groping and digging for thousands of years and has made discoveries that have startled him. Even in comparatively recent days he has discovered how to chart the seas, how to measure the heavens, how to weigh the earth and the planets, how to dissect material, how to mount up on wings and soar the heavens faster than the fleetest bird, how to reach into the invisible atmosphere and draw out the programs of his choice, how to overcome many of his hereditary enemies that have caused disease and death, how to fulfill the words of Jesus, "Greater works than these shall ye do." Man is truly overcoming this world of matter.

Moreover, everything seems to be, and indeed is, laden with power. Power is everything! Power enough in a chunk of coal or a small stone to blow up this city, if all its inherent power could be released. "Power in the rotting leaf," says Carlyle, "else how could it rot." Every rock and stick of wood and blade of grass, and flake of snow is holding within itself vast unclaimed resources of power, for everything is bundled energy. Physically our bodies are millions of whirling worlds. Our bodies are energy divinely formulated into flesh, and bone and blood.

But—all this material world that is pulsing and throbbing with life, that is packed with power and possibilities is but suggestive of the far more important hidden riches that are latent in the Bible, the Church and the individual life.

I. The Hidden Riches of the Bible.

No treasure is so inexhaustible as the Bible. Libraries have been written on its treasures that have been mined, and yet new riches are constantly being found. The Bible is humanity's treasure-chest. It is the deepest and wisest interpreter of all the mystery of existence. There is mystery with the Bible; there is nothing but mystery without the Bible. Those in Christian faith and fervor, those in sin and despair; those in health and happiness, those in weakness and sorrow, those in peace and prosperity; those in darkness and poverty—all mankind—can find in the Word of God, forgiveness, counsel, guidance, friendship, light and life. It stands forever because in the center of its ring of truth blazes the priceless Jewel, Jesus.

II. The Hidden Riches of the Church.

The Church is the hands of the Bible. Too long those hands have been partly paralyzed with indifference; too long they have been tied with the chords of controversy. Today, however, in spite of all her faults, the Church

has broken most of the shackles which have bound her, and is advancing into every corner of the world with life and love and lifting power.

I know something about the lakes of blood the Church shed in the days when it was heresy to believe other than the traditional beliefs of the Church. I am aware of the crimes the Church has committed against men's bodies and minds. I have reviewed more than once the dark days when the Church stood boldly against the advancement of science and by the destruction of many thousands kept the world dark for centuries. And all in the name of Him who said, "I am come that ye might have life and that ye might have it more abundantly."

I know that dark side of Church history, but I know, too, that the Church has been the mother of saints, of art, of literature, of colleges, of hospitals, of the best that this world has. The Church has been the door to the hidden riches of faith and hope, it has been the inspiration to noble living, and vicarious giving; it has laid the foundations of democracy, of higher education, and of healing helpfulness to earth's poor and suffering. It has ever urged humanity to resist the baser influences, to be dissatisfied with what we are as it challenges us on to higher thinking and more unselfish living.

The Church will change but it cannot die. It must change, if it would be of service in changing days. The Church has always been too much bound by tradition; it was in Jesus' time; it is today. Increasingly the Church must take on a new emphasis for a new day. The new emphasis, as I see it, will be two-fold, viz., 1. less preaching and more worship, and 2. more Christion education.

No field of human endeavor holds so great an unopened and promised treasure as the Church. The Church today has a vision of recreating humanity. With all our tens of thousands of years of evolution more than half the people of the world are uncivilized and unchristianized. What evolution cannot do, what science is powerless to do, the Gospel of Jesus Christ can do and is doing. It is remaking mankind.

Where in all this great world is there so much romance, so much adventure, as in the task of recreating a billion human lives! Truly the Church holds in its possession unclaimed hidden riches of sufficient wealth to make all mankind eternally rich. The Church stands today on the threshold of victory, overlooking a new heaven and a new earth.

III. The Hidden Riches of the Individual Life.

The same God who created this world of hidden treasures, and inspired this Book of unsearchable riches, and ordained the Church of eternal wealth, created you and me but little lower than Himself and crowned us with infinite possibilities. Inherent within your life and mine are undreamed of treasures. Each life like the mighty universe is pulsing and throbbing with power. Yet we are poor when we might be rich, pigmies when we might be giants. God requires of us that we open our treasures, that we develop our powers. He holds us responsible not for what we know but for what we can know, not for what we have but for what we can have, not for what we are but for what we can become.

We can so live the Christian life that we shall feel the pulse of God's oceanic heart throbbing in us, and inspiring us to develop the unopened treasures of

the soul. It is a life worth ten thousand times the cost. Just to feel that we are little pools by the side of the infinite sea, and that the tides are pouring in and pouring out. That is life at its best; that is life which has developed its priceless gifts.

There is a picture of a scene in an oriental city where a beggar is seated beside a sunny wall. With a cup outstretched, he begs for alms, sleeping while he waits. A benevolent passer-by thinks to surprise him with a rich gift. A second pedestrian catches sight of the glittering coin, removes it quietly and goes on his way. "He cannot lose what he knows not he had," argues the thief. So the beggar sleeps on unmindful of gain or loss. And so unnumbered thousands are asleep to the opportunities which would reveal the unopened treasures of life.

Long ago Jesus told a group of average men that they were to go into all the world and preach the gospel. They smiled and said, "Lord we love Thee, but we are only ordinary, faltering, doubting men. Why, Master, it takes the Roman Army backed by the wealth and genius of a mighty empire to go into all the world. And we—we haven't conquered our own fears and besides we are just common laborers and have the inferiority complex." Jesus answers, "All power is available, go ye therefore, You will be sufficiently changed," said Jesus, "when you get enough of this power so that you'll go anywhere." How am I to get this power? The disciples got it by giving their lives up completely to prayer and meditation, in faith believing the promise of Jesus that all power was available to them.

The greatest want of the world today is not for Christians—it is for *power-full* Christians. Christ is having a great struggle everywhere in this materialistic age to get men to take Him seriously—to live close enough to Him to become *power-full*. The Kingdom of God on earth is waiting for human hearts to operate to his power. Yet, great leaders of all denominations are saying that there is a great wistfulness abroad today. The hearts of men are tired of things and hungry for the power of God. Even the Church today is being driven back to God.

You remember the story of the poor Boer farmer. He struggled for years to glean a livelihood out of his rocky soil, only to go off in despair to seek his fortune elsewhere. Years later, coming back to his old farm, he found it swarming with life and machinery. More wealth was being dug out of it every day than he ever dreamed existed in the world. It was the great Kimberly Diamond Mine.

The material world, the Bible, the Church, the individual life are each great Kimberly Mines of largely unopened treasures. We have been trying to glean success and happiness from the surface of the soil of ease and pleasure. My friends, *dig deeper! Dig to the depths*, there are hidden riches there!

MID-WEEK SERMON

THEME: ***Is God Our Father?***

TEXT: Romans 8:19.

"Even the creation waits with eager longing for the sons of God to be revealed."—Moffatt. Teaching of Christ the hope of the world: so it is

often asserted. But what is the heart of the teaching of Christ? It is the revelation of God to man, introducing man to God.

Jesus and the Idea of God: Men of Jesus' day were confident they knew all that was to be known concerning God. Creator; Judge; Warrior. To Jesus he was Father, and it was to the Father-God that he wished to introduce men. This was the revolutionary thing. It brought God closer to every individual. It made God universal. It established a definite, understandable relationship. "We believe that all who receive the Gospel are called and enabled to live in fellowship with God as his chidren, to keep his commandments, to grow in knowledge of his love, and to trust his fatherly care in every trial and perplexity, thereby in their whole life showing themselves thankful to God for all his gifts."

"All Who Receive the Gospel": There must be reception. The mind must be in it, but the heart must go along. It is not exclusive. "Whosoever will may come." He is father of all. All are sons. Some do not behave as sons. But God is patient, a quality of true love.

"Called and Enabled": "To live in fellowship with God as his children." The family of God. Provision: "his fatherly care." Matthew 7:11. Discipline: "to keep his commandments." "Forgive us as we forgive"—implies obligation. Reward: Matthew 6:4, 6, 18 (ASV). Not necessarily "openly." Christ assures the least effort toward Christian living and spirit will not fail in spirit and life. Matthew 10:42. Thankfulness: "in their whole life."

TOPICS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE'S SOCIETIES

CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR: Y. P.—March topic, the Trinity. "The Grace of Christ, the Son." John 1:15-17. II Cor. 8:9. II Tim. 2:1-3.
Jr.—Team Work. Neh. 4:13-21.
LUTHER LEAGUE: Sr.—What Does God Expect of Us? Micah 6:6-8.
Y. P.—Same.
Inter.—Christ's Kindness. Mark 1:40-42.
WALTHER LEAGUE: March Topic—Missions. Missions in age of Materialism and scientific advancement. Report on Missions in various countries.

FOR THE BULLETIN BOARD

Now is the only time you can show your love.
The lower the ceiling the greater the peril for the flier.
When you are forced to earth be forced to heaven.
True religion cannot be merely a selfish ecstasy.
Share fellowship even if it is all you can share.
The Jericho Road still numbers high its brigands.
Who else ever said, "I come that ye might have peace." Take it or leave it.
Faith may be venturesome and still be faith.
You can't slip back up-grade.
On a heavy grade the tracks must be sanded.
Love's incense rises beyond all else.

MARCH, THIRD SUNDAY

CALL TO WORSHIP: "And this is the message which we have heard from Him and announce unto you, that God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all."
PSALM: 122.
PRELUDE: Andante Seraphique—*Debat.*
ANTHEM: The City Beautiful—*Federlein.*
OFFERTORY: Antiphone—*Batiste.*
POSTLUDE: Fugue Postlude—*Rinck.*
OFFERTORY SENTENCE: "Let all that are 'round about Him bring presents unto Him Who ought to be feared."
OFFERTORY PRAYER: Open our hands to those who need, open our hearts to those who need Thy love and benediction, and keep us humble in our use of that which Thou hast placed in our keeping. Teach us to answer at Thy call, so that no plan of Thine in which we may have a part may go awry. Accept our offering today as a token of our trust in Thee and Thy concern for the salvation of the many who yet withhold their tithe of the gifts placed in their keeping for the short days upon earth. Many who have had much, and knew not how to give, have learned how to receive, and we pray Thee to let this plan work also in our lives if need be. We are concerned for time eternal, not for today, and we trust in Thy wisdom. Bless us and keep us in Thy service until Thou art ready for us. Amen.
BENEDICTION: Peace be unto thee, now and as the years progress, and may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ abide with you evermore.

SERMONS

THEME: ***The Church of the Living Christ.***
W. J. REES.

TEXT: "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches." Rev. 2:7.
HYMNS: "I love Thy Zion, Lord."—*St. Thomas, S. M.*
"O Where Are Kings and Empires Now."—*St. Anne, C. M.*

Western civilization has fallen on perilous days. Its deceptive creations are falling about our feet in disastrous ruin. We said we were building well the citadel of security and good-will; but it has proven itself to be another tower of Babel whose thundering collapse, to the accompaniment of blood and tears, is teaching us once more the old, old story, that security and creative good-will among men and nations, without God, is the tragic will o' the wisp of man's egotistical yearnings.

We have been awakened, startled from a deep sleep upon the seductive couches of complacency, by the thunderous crumblings of the Jericho walls of man's selfishness. Let us thank God for that awakening. That is the prelude to the great task that confronts us.

Why is it, if the church of the living Christ be the redemptive light of the world, that so many nations are caught up in the darkness of a new paganism, whilst others court dangerously its snarling fringe? Our responsibility as Christians for the present debacle,—which is the measure of our failure—is rooted in our conception of Church. To focus a critical attention upon that conception is the burden of this sermon.

There is very definitely a brazen difference between the popular conception of church,—which in reality is institutionalized religion—and the New Testament teaching of church.

If the contemporary institution called the church of Christ is to fulfil the ethical imperatives and obligations of its faith in a society that only patronizingly, if at all, takes cognizance of Christianity in the conduct of its affairs, then we who constitute the church must address ourselves to the *Why* of its being.

The church—that is, the contemporary institution—does not by virtue of its name constitute the church in the New Testament meaning of that term. It becomes a part of the church of the living Christ only when its communicants become conscious—and act upon that consciousness—of their unique, their distinctive function in society. Until we are caught up once again in that consciousness, we will continue to fail with increasingly disastrous consequences. These are times when we should treat superficiality and sentimentality as cardinal sins. We have betrayed our Lord, time and again, with the twin kisses of superficiality and sentimentality.

What then is our unique function in society? In other words, what constitutes the Saving Church?

The Saving Church, contradistinct to the religious institution that is called the church, yet in reality might be anything but the church, is that fellowship of men and women born of the faith, affirmation or conviction, that 'God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself.' It is the fellowship of the Incarnation. That was the faith affirmation that brought the church into being, and there can be no Saving Church where that affirmation does not exist as an absolute qualitative norm evaluating and judging the conduct of the fellowship, and of the society, in whose midst it is placed to redeem. Here we find the sanction for a truly creative Christian ethic.

What happens? The economic, the political, the socio-cultural fibres of society become the warp and woof of the stuff out of which we fashion the pattern of the cross. The cross becomes the ethical imperative of the Eternal in time. This it is that gives meaning and redemptive significance to what would otherwise remain the meaningless flux of life. It enables us to place lesser loyalties in wholesome perspective, thus making them contributory, rather than inhibitory to the absolute demand of God in Christ.

History is replete with examples of the religious institution we call the church, having substituted the fitful flickers of 'seasonal prejudices' for the redeeming brilliance of the Word of God in Christ—the consuming flame of the Incarnation. We have pitched our tents far too often on the leeward side of Golgotha's foothills, and there has been no power of resurrection stirring in our all too complacent constituency.

Van Paassen in his magnificent autobiography "Days of Our Years" writes, "If the Church . . . is to fulfill its destiny and to be that incarnation, . . . It must sever the attachments that bind it to Moloch and Mammon and stop striving for a meaningless outer conformity and instead, for the sake of peace on earth and the brotherhood of man, march forward in a community of spirit with all the forces of the future against the citadels of sin and darkness and poverty and misery and sorrow. The Church must again become what the Master called it to be, a ferment in society, the salt of the earth." Let us give that challenge some pertinent consideration.

To a philosophy based upon the pseudo-biology of purity of blood, whose virtues are the bloody bludgeonings of brute force and the brutal oppressions

of blind passions, the Church of the living Christ must announce the judgment of God.

To a philosophy that militantly proclaims that the universe is of such stuff as to respond only to the frenzied fashioning of a godless asylum for the world's proletariats, and that makes a god of a godless state, whose prime virtue is the Machiavellian obscenity that the end justifies the means, the Church of the living Christ must announce the judgment of God.

To the peoples of a democracy—especially if they be Christian people—whose spiritual foundations have been weakened by the ever growing impact of the spirit of secularism and its attendant cultured godlessness, the Church of the living Christ must announce that democracy is not an inevitability writ large in the scheme of things; that its price is eternal vigilance and unyielding obedience to the will of God in Christ, Creator of Heaven and Earth, and Father of all mankind. 'This is a moral universe. Be not fooled, for as ye sow so shall ye reap.'

Yes, the church must again turn her face unflinchingly and unafraid toward Jerusalem, if out of the chaos of today is to dawn the redemptive impact of a creative tomorrow. The way ahead for the church of the living Christ is a hard way, a way which leads to the treacherous foothills of Golgotha. She may hesitate, but only to sojourn a while in the garden of Gethsemane, to commune with her Lord. She dare not stop, lest she betray her Christ; but must ascend its inhospitable steeps, and there upon Calvary's top, with the stigmata of her Lord upon her travailed body, she will receive the sustaining embrace of His resurrection power.

We have something to say to society that is not of man, but of God, and we must say it. So caught up once again in a revitalized consciousness of our unique mission in the world of men, as a fellowship begotten of God, whose immutable ethical imperative is the cross, we walk life's dusty streets prosecuting an intense evangelism, while at the same time announcing with prophetic acuteness and audacity, the inevitable doom that awaits life—in both its personal and corporate aspects—that is out of plumb with the will of God in Christ.

We must become participants in the creation of a society "subsisting in unity of love," and which shall bear an ever-increasing likeness to God's nature in Christ. Then and only then will we become members of the Church of the living Christ, aroused again to our redemptive task in the world of men.

"Rise up O men of God
Have done with lesser things
Give heart and soul and mind and strength
To serve the King of kings.
Lift high the cross of Christ.
Tread where his feet have trod
As brothers of the Son of Man
Rise up O men of God."

Third Sunday in Lent (Oculi).

THEME: ***Defence and Confidence.***

PAUL G. KRUTZKY, D. D.

TEXT: "But when the disciples had formed a circle around him, he rose up and came into the city."—Acts 14:20.

A cripple is made to walk again, or rather for the first time, since he had been a cripple from his mother's womb. So impressed were the people that they called the disciples gods, and would have sacrificed to them had not the disciples restrained them. In the crowd, some Jews who had heard the disciples preach at Iconium and Antioch stirred up the people so that their veneration quickly turned to enmity. Paul, as the leader, was stoned and dragged half-dead, out of the city. This was done as a sign of the utter contempt in which these people had come to hold the disciples, and also to signify that he was unworthy of burial. This is the same incident to which Paul refers in II Cor. 11:25: "once was I stoned." Later the Apostle refers to it in writing to his fellow-laborer, Timothy, who came from this very section where it occurred, II Tim. 3, 11.

This incident shows us how heathen treachery, which one moment is ready to defy, is the next moment ready to crucify. But Paul being persecuted is not forsaken. A little band of converts at Lystra encircle him, anxious to help him if need be or bury him if dead. Paul rose up as if by a miracle and returned again to the city. These believers, did not desert the disciples, but remained loyal to them. Among these undoubtedly were the friends of the cripple cured at Lystra, and it was probably these who formed the circle around Paul. This action was not only a sort of defence, but also a confession of their faith in Paul. The effect was to encourage and strengthen Paul in his work.

We have here the picture of many a disciple of Jesus, for they who serve and follow Christ must suffer persecution. To the man on the ground there is only security, so long as the circle remains unbroken. So too, when the servant of Christ finds himself surrounded by a friendly circle, he can better endure persecution. But there are ways in which this circle is often broken. Sin enters the ranks and cripples some one belonging to the circle.

Neglect of duty breaks the circle and some one must suffer. Indifference as to whether the circle remains intact is dangerous for the man on the ground, and thus to the cause of Christ. Again, selfishness breaks the circle, for, like in a chain, each link must play a part. Discouragement likewise breaks the circle. The people who were around Paul had hopes that he was still alive, hence they formed a circle of encouragement.

The circle must be kept together otherwise it is in danger of dissolving. This is especially true of the Church or the congregation. Often a member dies or leaves the circle of believers. Some of the people around Paul probably did leave him. Others, on the other hand, had faith in Paul and his cause and remained to keep the circle complete. Christ, himself, had a similar experience. We read that His disciples once left Him and walked no more with Him, and before His end they all forsook Him and fled. It is the duty of the leader to fill the gaps in the circle of those who believe, and

it is also the duty of those within the circle to welcome the newcomer in the ranks so that the work may grow and increase.

We are all in a way standing around Jesus, especially in spirit, at this time of His Passion. We can by faith and devotion make our part of the circle secure. We can also protect, by our presence, His servant, the Pastor. Had these people at Lystra not encircled Paul a great disciple of the Lord would have been lost to the Church. The question before us today is, what kind of circles can we form around Jesus? First of all, like the man on the ground Christ needs personal support. Each one of us must put his life in the breach. Aaron and Hur held up the hands of Moses and victory came to God's people. The disciples stood behind Peter at Pentecost. In like manner it encourages and inspires the Pastor to have behind him the personal support of all his people.

We, in the Church, can also form a circle of Prayer around the leader. Christ himself bade His disciples to pray and taught them how to pray, and Paul knew the power in prayer and urges us to pray always for all things and for all men. We can also form circles of loyalty and co-operation around the Pastor. Nehemiah could rebuild the walls of Jerusalem because the people had a mind to work and co-operated with him. So too must any leader have the co-operation of his followers, as well as their loyalty to him and the cause, in order that success may crown their united efforts.

The circle sags and is broken when the links in the circle are weak in faith and devotion. We can, however, make it strong by encouragement and belief. Doubt breaks the circle; faith and confidence keep it strong. Hence in the work of the Church we need the support of those who believe in the work.

Those who throw a wet blanket on effort merely hinder the work. What the Church needs especially in our day is the help and encouragement of people who are positive, people who can see the bright side of things. Suppose some one in the circle around Paul had said: "Let us get away from here, the man is dead, and there is no further use of us being here." What an effect would this have upon the others? But many people are just like this. They think the cause of Christianity is dead, all that it needs is decent burial. Others cannot understand the power in a small circle, and cannot grasp the effects of that circle on the world around. But the power is nevertheless there. If you cast a pebble into a quiet pond you will notice how the circle broadens and widens until both shores are reached. That is just the way the influence of the Church works. It is like the leaven which Jesus mentions and which leavens the whole lump. It is really wonderful the amount of good a small body of earnest Christians can exert.

There is still another thought which this idea of a circle suggests. A circle represents unity. Where men join hands in any given undertaking their interests become one. Hence in the work of the Church the interests of Pastor and people are one. Whatever injuries or benefits one will injure or benefit the other. The circle can only be kept intact by mutual respect and confidence in one another.

The greatest and perhaps the strongest circle we can form is that of love and constancy. It surely inspires us when we know that some one loves us, and in spite of our defects and defeats, the sneers of our enemies and the coldness of the world, believes in us. The one thing which Christ inspired in his followers as no one else has been able to do,

was love for Him personally. Love in the sense which Christ teaches us is only possible among persons.

If we love the Church we are bound to love the leader who is Christ. This love says Paul is the bond of perfectness, and without it it is impossible either to please God or to follow Christ. The things we can easily do are as a rule the things we love, and the people whom we can serve best are the people whom we love.

The believers in Jesus form a circle of love. To withdraw from this circle is to lose contact with the source of love. When Judas went out from the Twelve he lost contact with the circle of Christ's lovers and thus went to his doom.

The absent Thomas fell into doubt and only believed when he had established contact with Jesus. We must form circles of constancy around Jesus. In our fickle age too many love Jesus in spasms. Spasms are not what Jesus wants or deserves. He who loves us with an everlasting love, would have our constant devotion, hence the circle around Jesus must be a permanent one. Especially is this needed in the Church today. Very often the member of the circle of believers is only half-hearted in his devotion to Christ. The Saviour wants our whole heart. We must be either on His side or against Him. If we consider His devotion to us, we shall have an incentive for our devotion. His constant love is to be our model and pattern. This lukewarmness is the greatest source of weakness in the Church today. Therefore we must strengthen the links in the chain, and cement the circle by love and constant devotion.

Finally, the circle is a sign and symbol of victory. Surely God meant something when He made the heavenly bodies and our earth circles. We call it the family circle because a bond of love and blood holds it together. Thus, too, must there be a bond of love holding together all who profess Christ, for we are by faith one in blood, one in hope and love. And it is when we hold hands that victory comes. To the victor in the contests of life a crown is promised. Christ, Himself, is crowned with many crowns, as well as He was with the Crown of thorns in the days of His flesh. May this incident in the life of Paul teach us all to keep within the circle of Christ's people. If any one of us is outside the circle of Christ's love, let him come and join it, for if we want the circle of salvation, the crown of everlasting life, we must belong to the circle here on earth.

PRAYER

O God, our heavenly Father, we would follow the Christ who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, but we so often follow afar off. Forgive us our mediocrity. We make profession with our lips, 'that the letter killeth, 'tis the spirit that giveth life'; but so often we allow the letter to thwart the fructifying work of the spirit. Forgive us O God our blindness.

We profess the Cross of Christ the power of God unto salvation. But so often we render void its redeeming impact upon a sinful world by our slavish adherence to the interpretations of fallible men. Forgive us, O God, our spirit of arrogance and self-righteousness. Truly humble us that we may look upon the life of Him, whom we call Lord, and thereby, learn that the world of sinful men will be drawn to this Cross of Redemption, by the cleansing and creative force of cross-bearing lives. That is, by Thy grace, our

glorious task. Give us strength to acquit ourselves well, so that when the time comes, when all secrets will be made known, we shall hear the voice from on high saying, "Well done good and faithful servants."

This our Father, in the sobering quiet of this sanctuary hour is the prayer of our heart of hearts. Amen.

W. J. Rees

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

The Lord's Supper.

LESSON: Luke 22:1-38. Print Luke 22:14-30.

GOLDEN TEXT: "As often as ye eat this bread, and drink the cup, ye proclaim the Lord's death till he come." I. Cor. 11:26.

DEVOTIONAL READING: Jeremiah 31:31-34.

INTER. & SR. TOPIC: The Meaning of the Lord's Supper.

Y. P. & ADULTS: An Enduring Memorial.

The Hebrew feast of the Passover commemorated the deliverance of Israel. Now a greater redemption was to be purchased by the blood of Christ, and those who would accept His salvation were to put away *sin* from their lives. This was the last meal of which He partook with those who had been so close to Him. While the Passover called to mind the great national deliverance it pointed forward to a still greater deliverance to come, namely, that which was to be effected by the death of Christ. And so the Lord's Supper points us backward to the great redemption which He achieved by His atoning death and at the same time forward to the fuller redemption which He will accomplish in His return.

The teacher should lay emphasis upon the fact that the term "Communion" as applied to this Last Supper indicates not only our communion with one another and with our Lord, but also our communion with that great host of the redeemed who have gone before.

Some attention should be paid to the externals of the feast. The pictures of the Last Supper, the most famous of which is Leonardo Da Vinci's, are not intended as historical representations of that event. It is altogether likely that the group sat on the floor as was customary in feasts of this kind.

Emphasis should be laid on an explanation of the "sop," which our Lord handed to Judas. (John 13:26). At Syrian feasts, especially in the region where Jesus lived, such sops were handed to those who stand and serve the guests. Choice bits of food are thus handed to friends by one another as signs of close intimacy. No person would hand such a sop to one for whom he cherishes no friendship. When Jesus handed Judas a sop it was as though He said, "Judas, as my disciple, I have infinite pity for you. You have proved false, you have forsaken Me in your heart, but I will not treat you as an enemy for I have come not to destroy but to fulfill. Here is my token of friendship." Thus, in this simple act, we have perhaps the finest practical example of "love your enemies" in the entire Gospel.

For us, the time of the Communion should be one of self-examination, our loyal obedience, our knowledge of Christ, our progress in the Christian life,

our thorough-going devotion to Him and willingness to sacrifice and serve in His cause, examination of those motives which first impelled us to become Christians. Paul says, "Let a man examine himself." In all of these things we should examine our own hearts, as we come to the Lord's Table.

EVENING SERMON

THEME: ***The Tragic Extremes of Life.***

RICHARD BRAUNSTEIN, CHAPLAIN U. S. ARMY.

TEXT: Deut. 32:39.
HYMNS: "A Charge to Keep I have."—*St. Ethelwald, S. M.*
"Am I a Soldier of the Cross."—*Groningen, C. M.*

"What impresses you the most as you visit the Civilian Conservation Corps camps?"

The question was put to me by a dinner partner, in the midst of the most luxurious surroundings. I think she was merely making conversation,—being polite.

I could have sat, chin on hand, a far away look in my eyes, like Rodin's statue "The Thinker." Not being in the mood for serious thought at the moment, I made some kind of remark which was lost, as I thought it would be, by a *bon mot* spoken on the other side of my table companion.

Of course, the answer to the question was "The Tragic Extremes of Life." Was and IS. There is nothing like contrast as a teaching force. Comparisons may be odious, but not always. Comparisons are revealing.

An exotic bunch of flowers graced the center of the table, flanked by shining silver and snowy napery. Those flowers would have cost a CCC enrollee one month's salary or more. Like one of Eugene O'Neil's characters, I thought in one set of words while I conversed with a different set. The trouble was that my associates were a group of persons educated away from the realities of life. Refined, but remote. Facts, the truth, was the last thing they wanted. Which accounts for many strange doings and escape mechanisms current.

If they had ever learned Thomas Hood's "Song of the Shirt" with its melancholy dirge, "Stitch, Stitch, Stitch" it was as a piece of home-work in long ago school days, not as an exercise in sociology. Nor would they relate Jacob Riis' "The Other Half" with this desperate business of living.

Poverty is never a pleasant subject. It spoils the appetite. Sickness and hunger, forced crime and attendant tragedy raises havoc with the digestion. To many it is all too ghastly to be true. As I looked about me and studied the faces of the dinner guests, I coined the phrase, "Vogue on the outside, vague on the inside."

We are told that O. Henry gave us the technique of the Short, Short Story. There was a man who could indeed turn a phrase, apt, cogent. But long before O. Henry, there was given to the world and the ages a matchless bit of literature named, "The Good Samaritan." That classic begins with "A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho." That road from Jerusalem to Jericho is an international highway. Its traffic stream crosses all

hearts and doors. We cannot hide our faces or turn our backs. It is not only necessary to police this highway with kind deeds and helping hands but with marine corps and battleships—because minorities are oppressed and racial hatreds are rampant. Yes, life is very real. It reaches beyond the sheltered lives, social registers and place cards,—our little programs and petty plans. A nation may perhaps save its face with a "Neutrality Act" but no person deserves a good night's rest, unless he at least thinks, helpless as he may, about it all and recalls with the Indian, "There are always people on the other side of the hill." We really go places when we get people to think.

It was the business of the writer to visit CCC camps and conduct religious services and grant personal interviews. He was supposed to teach, guide, hearten, inspire those for whom "Life had Tumbled In," and those who were "Crushed by Things." But no man can stand before such groups without learning something in turn. One thing learned was that it is always wretched economy not to say gross ignorance, to question the cost of money, not only for CCC camps, but everywhere, for anything that builds character. Character building agencies are far more economical and practical than penal institutions and reformatory measures.

Our task is to get heaven into men. It is a mistake to think that a preacher's or teacher's function is to get men into heaven, primarily. After all, we are not training men how to die. We are training men how to live. We need these men for our future. Before that, they need us in their groping present. They do not need our Republican or Democratic parties nor yet our denominational labels so much as they need and that at once, whatever great ideals and regnant ideas might still remain in these great groups.

The River of History must be made to change its course by virtue of our Holy Engineering or else it will again go berserk, overflow its banks and leave a trail of devastation and destruction. History must not be permitted to repeat itself save in those roles which make a nation great and give us a righteous world.

Somebody said that the only time to go to war is when our own shores are threatened. We are not at present concerned with the truth of that statement. But we can readily agree and state without mental reservation that our danger is, at present from within. Ideologies false to the core, destructive beyond words are at work. Youth is a proving ground, a practice field. Youth is impressionistic, imitative, succumbs to the lure of the strange and fantastic. It explores, experiments, goes adventuring. Therefore Communism rears its ugly head. Nazism sprays its poison. Fascism spreads its social and economic disease. These bid for the heart-throbs and pulse-beats of our youth and win the loyalties and sacrifices of mistaken maturity.

The theme of our writers and songsters and thinkers is, "it is Great to be an American." It was always like that. We want it to be like that,—always. But living in America, merely, does not make an American in the best sense of the word. There is an American way of thought and action which makes the best citizen.

We are a Democracy. The basic principle of a Democracy is not the elimination or annihilation of a poorer or lesser class but the elevation of all,

father-in-law.
to man's instinct for survival.

The Last Enemy: The strongest instinct in life is to cling
in much of our thinking is an enemy, "the last enemy." This he
our own death, or that of a loved one. "We believe that after death th
continues to live, in the just and merciful keeping of Almighty God, who will
give to it a body as it pleases him. We believe that he, who alone can read the heart, will judge the world in righteousness by Jesus Christ, and that wickedness will not go unpunished. We believe that those who accept the mercy of God will in his fellowship go on towards perfect holiness and blessedness. And, with glad and solemn hearts, we look for the consummation and bliss of the life everlasting, wherein the people of God, freed forever from sin and sorrow, shall serve him in the perfected communion of saints." "I rest my own confidence in the life to come mainly upon these two great faiths, my faith in the worth of man and my faith in the integrity of God." —Charles R. Brown.

"His Servants Shall Serve Him": Life after death is not pictured for us as inactive ease. Rest, yes, and service. In heaven there is harmony, beauty, fellowship. There is no ceasing of activities in the spirit.

The Use of This Life: God has the measure of our lives. We should make sure the character, the quality of the personality we are building here, is worthy of continuance, of survival.

TOPICS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE'S SOCIETIES

CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR: Y. P.—The Trinity. The Holy Spirit. John 14:15-17. 16:13-14.
Jr.—How Did my Church Begin? Acts 2:37-42.
LUTHER LEAGUE: Sr.—Why and How Should We Pray. Luke 11:1-13.
Y. P.—Same.
Inter.—Christ's Bravery. John 18:1-12.
WALTHER LEAGUE: March topic—Missions. Cost, number of workers, members. What proportion of Church money used for Missions. Calls to The Mission Field.

SERMONS

Midnight.

CE EDWARD MACARTNEY, D. D.

.T: "Cain went out from the presence of the Lord." Gen. 4:16.

HYMNS: "Ask ye what Great Thing I know."—*Hendon,* 7s.
"Just As I am."—*Woodworth, L. M.*

Sin goes in clusters. Cain commenced with jealousy, and that was soon followed by murder, lying, and callous selfishness. Sin never hunts alone. When there is wrong in a life in one place, it is sure to be found elsewhere. Cain went out from the presence of the Lord, and the whole history of sin is contained in that first separation.

I. Sin separates man from his friends. It is not meet for man to be alone. But sin drives man out, breaks his contact and union with his fellow man. That is the history of sin in the Bible and in the human race. Always out! Sin has never had any other effect in the history of the human heart.

Sin broke up the first human family, and it has been doing that ever since. Families may be separated by hundreds or thousands of miles, and yet because of common blood, interests, affections, and loyalties, they are spiritually united. No, distance nor death, can separate families; but sin can and does separate them. They may live under the same roof, and dine at the same table, and yet be sundered far by the gulf of transgression.

One hour before his fatal duel with Alexander Hamilton, Aaron Burr, sitting in his library at Richmond Hill in New York, wrote to his beloved daughter, Theodosia, "Some very wise man has said,

"O fools, who think it solitude to be alone."

This is but poetry. Let us therefore drop the subject, lest it lead on to another on which I have imposed silence on myself". All ready, even before the fatal shot was fired, and the bloody deed was done, he felt the loneliness of his sin. In a few hours he was a fugitive from the sudden and deep abhorrence of his fellow citizens, his political career was over forever, and his great

ambitions wrecked. Henceforth, like Cain, he was practically a fugitive and a vagabond on the face of the earth. For the rest of his life until he died in poverty and obscurity and utter loneliness in the very city where he had risen to so great renown, Aaron Burr was a man without a country,—almost without a friend. It was the bitter truth he uttered, when, informed of the death of his beautiful daughter, Theodosia, he said, "I am severed from mankind." There are lonely people in Pittsburgh tonight, and thousands who carry heavy and difficult burdens of grief, anxiety, or pain, and disappointment. But the loneliest soul of all is the man whose transgression has raised up a wall, not of brick or mortar or stone, but terribly real and solid between him and his fellowmen. Yes, sin separates us from our friends.

II. Sin separates us from our true self. There is a true self and a false self. Many are living with the false self, and are divorced from their true self. The younger son parted with his true self when he left his father's house and wasted his substance in riotous living. He found it again when he came to himself down among the swine. Sin hurts others, but most of all it hurts the man who sins. "He that sinneth against Me wrongeth his own soul." "What does he think he will get out of it?" said one to me about a friend who had transgressed. Whatever he thinks he will get out of it, all that he will get will be separation from his best and higher self.

What could be sadder than to see that we have given up our high ideals and hopes and ambitions for ourselves? What could be sadder than to know that by our own conduct we have unfitted ourselves for the highest calling and the highest influence? What is the secret bitterness of him who would like to do a good work, but must stand aside because he feels it is not for him? So men have ruled themselves out of the work and life of Christ's Church because, even when repentant, even when forgiven, they feel that should they put a hand to the work, the cry of "hypocrite" might be raised, and their presence and help would thus do more harm than good. Therefore, let us so live to-day that tomorrow our mouth shall not be covered, and our uplifted arm shall not be paralyzed by the memory of past transgressions.

III. Sin separates from peace of mind. In Byron's great drama of "Cain," when Cain with his wife and child are about to leave their home and go out into the land of Nod, away from the presence of the Lord, Adah, Cain's wife, turning to look at the body of the fallen Abel, says, "Peace be with him;" but Cain answers, "But with me!" And there the great drama comes to a close. The suggestion of that exclamation of Cain is more powerful than any stanzas or paragraphs to tell that with Cain there was no peace. The drama of sin always ends there. It leaves man separated from his peace. Fears may die, but not remorse. If hell were just the invention of pale-faced theologians, long ago the race would have cast the idea overboard. But it still remains, because it is not the invention of men writing books, or upholding systems of thought, but is the deep affirmation of the human heart. Remorse is like the ground swell in the ocean after a storm. The storm has subsided, the sky is blue, the air is balmy, there is not a whitecap to be seen; but the ship heaves and tosses and leaves the traveller in misery because of the mighty swell that has remained after the original commotion has subsided. To sin is to say farewell to peace.

IV. Sin separates from God. All that we have said hitherto is summed up in this last statement, Sin separates us from God. Cain was troubled about his relationship with men, and the danger he was in, but most of all at the thought of being separated from God. "From thy face," he cried, "shall I be hid". David, when he came to himself after his great transgression, feared most of all that his sin would hide him from the face of God. Therefore, he prayed, "Cast me not away from Thy presence, and take not thy Holy Spirit from me." The first thing sin did was to make man in the Garden hide from the presence of God, and the last recorded effect of sin will be to make men hide from the face of God, when they shall call upon the rocks to fall upon them and the mountains to hide them from the face of Him that sitteth upon the throne.

When we speak of the separating power of sin, let no one imagine that this is true only of gross sins, such as Cain was guilty of. All sin tends to drive man out from the presence of God. It unfits us for communion with God, and worst of all, at length may kill and quench the very desire for such communion. One may think of some special transgression or inner disloyalty; another of the worldly drift and generally godless tone of his life. But whatever the recollection, the fact is established that sin separates us from the highest and the best. Life is hard for all. In this world we shall have tribulation. But if we hold to faith and a good conscience and keep ourselves right with God, we can face anything and endure all. To turn against reverence and purity and faith, is to have God and the universe against us, and on our side only the dragon and the devil. Therefore, avoid and fight against your one great foe, every kind and every degree of sin. When tempted most fiercely, and almost deluded and seduced by the lying pleasures of sin, remember that the end of it is separation from God.

If this were all, who could have hope? But God has had compassion upon mankind, and has sent His Son to tell the banished, whose sins have separated him from God, that now he can come home. And this is not because God makes light of sin, or because God forgives sin without any satisfaction, being rendered to His holy law, or without any change in the heart of the sinner; but because God has made peace with man through the blood of Christ shed for sinners on the Cross. It is on the ground of that death that the message of peace and of reconciliation goes forth tonight to all who will have it. Have your sins separated you from God? If so, repent and seek forgiveness, for God waits to be gracious. He waits as eagerly and patiently as that father of whom Christ told in His matchless tale, and who, while his son was yet a great way off, saw him and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him.

Fourth Sunday in Lent (Laetare).

THEME: *The Necessary Cross.*

RAY F. FISHER.

TEXT: Hebrews 9:11-15.
HYMNS: "Lord Jesus, When we Stand Afar."—*Ludborough, L. M.*
"O Jesus, Crucified for Man."—*Hamburg, L. M.*

As we approach Good Friday, one question is paramount in our minds.

That one question is made up of one word,—WHY? Why Good Friday? Why Calvary? Why was it necessary for the Son of God to suffer such a penalty? Since he did suffer such a penalty, we know it was necessary. Jesus, himself asked the Father to let the cup pass, if that was the Father's will. The Father's answer to Jesus in Gethesmane is "No."

Calvary's cross was necessary because God is the kind of God that He is, because God is a just, holy and righteous person. Consequently, sin is out of harmony with God. It is an offense against His very nature. A crime against God personally since he created man. These offenses against the holiness and righteousness of God cannot go unnoticed. They cannot be brushed aside as though they had not been committed.

If there were no punishment for sin, there could be no reward for goodness. Someone must pay the penalty for the sins of man, and that penalty is death —death spiritually. Man by his sins had separated himself from God, and he had to remain separated until those sins were accounted for. I say someone had to pay the penalty. Couldn't man have paid his own penalty? Yes, he could have, but that penalty was death, and if he received death he could not have received eternal life. Only God could receive death, and at that the death of everyone and at the same time conquer death by rising again. The cross was necessary because God is the kind of God that He is.

But that is not all. The cross was also necessary because man is the kind of being that he is. How else could man be brought back to God save by a broken heart on the cross. There was simply no other way: Each of you might name a different way as to how man could be brought back to God to worship him as the one and only true and living God, and I venture to say that God tried every way that you can name.

Men simply would not come to God by any means other than by the broken heart of God on a cross. I can imagine God in His sadness—I can imagine God in His sadness saying this to Himself; "I have tried my book, I have tried prophet, Priest, and Patriarch. I have tried prosperity, flood, famines, diseases, and panics. But they will not hear. They will not come back to me. I can imagine God saying further to Himself; There is just one more chance. I will give my Son to them—I will let Him die on a cross for them, in their stead. Then all they will need to do is to accept Him as their Saviour, as dying for them, and they can have eternal happiness. They will see his heart broken on the cruel cross. Surely then they will hear and come back to Me. It was the only way God could speak his love so that man could hear it and understand and respond.

"Since you and I have done this thing," said a noble wife to a weak husband, in a story which I recently saw quoted, "Since you and I have done this thing, we must meet its consequences together." The husband stares in astonishment. "But you haven't done it," he says. "God knows you couldn't have done it." The wife looks at him with an affectionate but sad countenance. "Have you lived with me all these years," she asks at last, "without ever learning that I love you so much that your deed is my deed too. No, I repeat, since you and I have done this thing, we will meet its consequences together." Then something within that man seemed to break and "out of the ruin a soul began to grow." Have we lived with God, in the

presence of God, have we lived with God this long without knowing that He loves us so much that he took our sins upon Himself—made them His. Why Calvary's Cross? Because men made it necessary. It was the only way.

The cross has always been considered as a tragedy. It was a tragedy that His young life was cut off in this horrible way, that He had to bear the pain and shame of death on the cross—perhaps the most ignoble means of death at that time—but it is also a climax. It is not defeat, but victory. For that cross has transforming power. It has become the greatest transforming power in the world today. That power can take a wreck of a human being and make of him a Son of God. It can take a miser and make of him a philanthropist. It can take a drunkard and make him temperate. It can take a dissipated, lustful moral weakling and make him chaste, pure and strong. The cross can do that in a very real way, and yet we present it in a kind of fictitious or apologetic manner. The startling observation of a noted author has its reproach for us, as he observes that religious people present truth as though it were fiction, while writers present fiction as though it were truth. Can you grasp the significance of that in one hearing?

If we will be honest with ourselves, and with God, as we look fully into the face of His Son on the cross, we shall be able to know the meaning and the necessity of it all. Especially shall we know something of its necessity as we hear those terrible, piercing words come from His lips, "My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?" You will be quite sure, won't you, that in this cry Jesus had let Himself come to the point where we surely would have come had He not taken our sins upon Himself. He was enduring our penalty and that penalty was the separation from God, forsaken by God.

This was not a mock ceremony; neither God nor Christ ever goes in for that. "If Christ had kept quiet here, kept His feelings to Himself, prayed it through in silence, without letting anyone know, then the world would have been sure that He went through it all without a let-down; that He was superior to it all and more powerful than both." We see all that in the resurrection, but there is something else that we need to see here. We need to know in this point of the crucifixion that we have a fully sharing Saviour; that He went through everything a human being ever could go through, touched shoulders with all. Perhaps it was only for a few moments but time is meaningless in eternity. It is the quality of the state condition that matters. So Christ in having gone through the state of the lost can and must be a thousand times more desirous of saving souls than we can possibly be, who have never tasted of that state, that penalty for sins, death; the doom of the damned.

The cross was necessary because there was no other way in which God could speak His love so that man could understand and respond—because, there was no other way in which God's forgiveness could deal with God's holiness. There was no other way in which a Holy God and a sinful humanity could be brought together in livable relationship.

Said Socrates, "It may be that the gods can forgive deliberate sin but how, I cannot tell." 450 years after Socrates lived, a cosmopolitan crowd is gathered on a skull-like hill. They called it Golgotha. We call it Calvary. There are Roman soldiers in their uniforms, members of the Sanhedrin in

their gay-colored cloaks, a mob of common people gathered to witness a crucifixion, a few faithful, forlorn followers of the condemned Man. A crying mother. There is the dull thud of sledge hammers. A calm still voice, in spite of pain speaks: "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do." Three crosses drop in their holes—there is darkness and earthquake—the voice speaks again—"It is finished." The lowly Nazarene has solved Socrates' problem. How does God forgive deliberate sin? By way of the Cross. How shall we change the heart of man? By way of the Cross. How shall we begin? Well, there is only one way to begin. I must start with myself.

PRAYER

O God, our Father, we thank Thee that the years come and the years go. We thank Thee for all the joy crowded into the years, for all the battles and struggles, for all the hard tasks. We thank Thee even for the falls, because we have learned from our weakness where our strength is. Let Thy blessing be upon our congregation this morning. Should there be discouraged hearts, awaken them to the power that they have, the power to defeat discouragement and bring on victory. There be those who tremble under the impact of sin. We pray Thee that they may reach out to Thee and hear Thy voice say, "Though your sins be as scarlet they shall be as white as snow, if Thou wilt give Thy life to the Christ that He may mould it to His will and likeness." Grant our prayer and Thy blessing this day in the name of our Master, Jesus the Christ. Amen.

Stanley E. Durkee, D. D.

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

Jesus Condemned and Crucified.

LESSON: Luke 22:39—23:56. Print Luke 23:13-25, 32-34a.

GOLDEN TEXT: "What then shall I do unto Jesus who is called Christ?" Matt. 27:22.

DEVOTIONAL READING: Isaiah 53:7-12.

INTER. & SR. TOPIC: What Shall I do with Jesus?

Y. P. & ADULTS: Christ on Trial Today.

The charge which the Jews brought against Jesus in Pilate's court was generally that of being seditious, and in particular forbidding His followers to pay taxes. Jesus had spoken again and again of the Kingdom of Heaven. There was a third charge brought by the Jews; that He claimed *kingship.* This was the charge that the Roman governor cared to investigate. Addressing the prisoner, Pilate asked, "Art Thou the King of the Jews?" (Luke 23:3.) Jesus answered him, "Sayest thou this of thyself or did others tell it thee of me?"

This was a most natural and fitting response of the Nazarene to the Roman. Jesus simply wished to know whether the question was asked from a Roman or Jewish—from a temporal or spiritual—standpoint. If Pilate was thinking of legions and navies of a king like Caesar, lording it over men

by sheer military power, surrounded by a scheming and corrupt court His answer would be an emphatic negative. If the inquiry was prompted by the Jews, it was pregnant with religious meaning and called for a different reply. But all of this was lost upon Pilate, who answered, "Am I a Jew? Thine own nation and the Chief Priests have delivered Thee unto me. What hast Thou done?" To this Jesus replied, "My Kingdom is not of this world; if my Kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews, but now is my Kingdom not from hence." (John 18:36.)

He had answered negatively: "My Kingdom is not of this world." There was no possible rivalry between Him and Caesar. But, in making this denial, He had used two words of grave import: "My Kingdom." How, thought Pilate, can He pretend to have a kingdom unless He pretends to be a King? Then he asked the question: "Art thou a King then?"

Rising from the simple dignity of a man to the beauty and glory and grandeur of God, Jesus used the most wonderful, beautiful and meaningful words in all the literature of the earth: "Thou sayest that I am—a King! To this end I was born, and for this cause I came into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice." (John 18:37.)

The effect of this statement on Pilate is evident for he at once appeared before the Priests and declared, "I find no fault with Him." (John 18:38.) Jesus was acquitted of the political charge. Through the course of the hearing Pilate pronounced Jesus innocent a total of six times. Christ had been returned by Herod to Pilate with the verdict "Jesus is innocent of crime." (Luke 23:15.)

With the strength of the Roman Empire behind him, with armed legions ready to spring at his command into defense of the law and of anyone falsely accused, Pilate presents here a most pitiable and miserable spectacle. His compromise in offering to release Barabbas or Christ is simply another evidence of his inherent weakness. Jesus or Barabbas? The multitude cried out, "Not this Man but Barabbas," and thus gave expression to the most awful choice ever formulated by men. We are making our similar choice today.

EVENING SERMON

THEME: ***God's purpose in Man's Procedure.***

HARRY W. STAVER, D. D.

TEXT: "He brought us out from thence that He might bring us in, to give us the land which He sware unto our fathers." Deut. 6:23.

The story of the Hebrew Exodus is interesting for several reasons. It is interesting from the historical standpoint since it provides an integral link in the formation and development of a nation. It is interesting from a social standpoint in that it reveals certain underlying causes which create a spirit of rebellion in men against existing conditions. In a psychological sense, it is interesting also because it unveils the actions and reactions of people engaged in a trying venture. For the Worship hour, however, the most pertinent

interest lies in the sermonic value of the incident, seeing that it furnishes us with a parallel from which to view, and perhaps to better understand, our own transition times.

The Exodus is an Interval. It is that period which lies between a dream and its achievement, between a promise and its fulfillment, between a thing begun and a thing finished.

The Exodus is, also, a Process. It is the road to a certain result and reward. It is the essential means to an anticipated end. It is the way of today in the hope of tomorrow.

The Exodus is, furthermore, an Experience. It is an experience marked by struggle, denial and sacrifice, not altogether unmingled with doubts, fears and even desperate despair.

But the Exodus is an Interval, a Process and an Experience that is shot through and through with God's divine Purpose. What that purpose is, in the specific case of the Hebrew slaves, Moses declares in the words of the text: "God brought us out from thence that He might bring us in to give us the land which He sware unto our fathers."

There is a sense in which every time of transition is like this ancient Exodus. It is interval, process, experience and the divine purpose. It is invariably a time of trouble, involving struggle and sacrifice and adjustment, with fear and trembling a likely part of the whole transaction. But back of it all, to the seeing eye and the understanding heart, there is always the Divine Intention which gathers up the loose ends of things and correlates what look like utterly unrelated incidents and events into one glorious and unified whole. And nothing makes the Process intelligible or the Experience endurable as does the persuasion that God is in all things and through all things and above all things. It is this fact of God amidst the facts of life that we must hold fast in the trying intervals that come.

Part of the Exodus account is concerned with what is called the desert episode. The Hebrew slaves, under the leadership of Moses who crystallized and organized the spirit of rebellion smoldering in the hearts of the people, had defied Pharaoh, escaped his military, crossed the Red Sea and, led by Miriam, sung their great song of triumph. Egypt was behind them, the Promised Land lay far ahead, the desert was all about them. The past was abandoned, the future not yet attained, meanwhile there was the present. The present is always the problem and the perplexity.

It is a far call from the Hebrew Exodus to our own upheaval. And yet there is a strange correspondence between the ancient day and our own that makes them kin. The Hebrew people cut loose from the familiar ways to which they had long been accustomed. They left a settled abode in Egypt, such as it was, and became nomads dwelling in tents. They entered into a new order of things—the desert with its demands. Modern man has done like things. He has cut loose from sanctions of long standing. He has broken with traditions and the established order. The settled abodes of thought and conduct have been scorned and even scrapped altogether. He has thrown off what he counted bondage and won a sort of release he has not yet learned to use aright. And the consequence of our way is now—the desert.

There are two groups of people visible in the old Exodus records just as there are two groups of people in our present day. One group is composed

of those who look backwards and the other group is made up of those who look forwards. Faced with the rigors of the desert, impatient at the restrictions, resentful of the things demanded of them, there were those who were ready to call it "quits." What good was a hope when it required such hazards? What worth was a future land, even one "flowing with milk and honey," when hunger was at hand? What value was the freedom they had gained when such a price had to be paid to maintain it? And so they gathered together, the disgruntled and discontented, and cried, "It is better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in this wilderness. Let us choose us a captain and return to Egypt."

We find any number of people like that today and we hear a very similar cry. Never was there such longing and demand on the part of so many people for security. There are plenty of people, in America at this hour, perfectly willing to abandon the democratic way of life, to surrender hard-won and exceedingly precious freedoms, to enter into bondage and submit to tyrannous dictatorship if, in exchange, they are promised security. Beyond any question the spread and acceptance of the Totalitarian idea by vast nations of people roots in this frantic desire of people to be taken care of.

The second group is otherwise minded. These are the valiant minority, the saving remnant. Faced with the same rigors, compelled to make the same sacrifices, yet there is in these an appreciation of the freedom gained that makes a return to Egypt an unthinkable thing. They are in the stern desert but the stern desert is not their destiny; they do not intend to stay there; God's promise holds better things. They are all for going on, not going back. Their rallying cry is the word of their leader, "God brought us out from thence that He might bring us in." In his essay called "Compensation," Emerson says, "We are idolaters of the old. We do not believe in the riches of the soul. We do not believe there is any force in today to rival and re-create that beautiful yesterday. We linger in the ruins of the old tent, where once we had bread and shelter, nor believe that the spirit can feed, cover and nerve us again. But we sit and weep in vain. The voice of the Almighty saith, Up and onwards forevermore. We cannot stay amidst the ruins."

God marches on! The desert is an interval, a process, an experience that is flooded and filled with God's purpose. We grow panicky in the process because we do not see that or are unwilling to believe it. The triumph came for Israel because there were some who dared to go the hard way with God. It will come for us, spite of all seeming to the contrary at the moment, if there be such daring also in enough of us.

MID-WEEK SERMON

THEME: ***Stewards of the Grace Of God.***

TEXT: 1 Peter 4:10; 1 Corinthians 4:2.

These verses hold the basic principles of Christian teaching in regard to our lives in the social and economic order. God never seeks your money. God always seeks persons: John 4:23.

"The Manifold Grace of God": Have you ever acknowledged the grace of God? Of course you have. Many times have I caught the eyes of the groom evidently thanking God for his bride. Proverbs 19:14. In the evening how often you have thanked God for the peace and comfort of your home. You find pride in your children. Psalm 147:13. You are grateful for your parents. For your friends. Many of us have found God in the shadows, as we never realized him in the sunlight. David found him in hell, the hell of his own miserable, sinful soul, and was glad for that abiding presence. "The manifold grace of God!" Do not miss that word, "manifold."

"Stewards of the Grace of God": And Peter calls us the agents of that grace with its many different forms and characters. We are not merely recipients. Life is given us not merely to hoard. I am not yet talking of money, but of all those things for which you have once and again thanked God. Have you been comforted of God in some great sorrow? Then be a comforter of other sorrowing ones. Have you been made strong in disaster, found an unexpected power so that you faced the future unafraid? Then share your courage with others. Speak the heartening word, reach out the strong helping hand to some other in his distress.

"Money, the Acid Test": "The sin we never mention": covetousness. Antithesis of stewardship. Here again we err in applying it only to money, to material things. Covetousness is a disease of the soul. It shrivels the soul. It stops the mind. Judas sold not Christ, but Judas. Covetousness always brings death. Death of mind and heart and soul. The covetous man is never a good son, or a good father, or a good friend, or a good citizen. To be all of these, or any of these, one must spend—spend the coinage of the heart and soul and mind. Hoarding of money is only the visible sign of an inward disease, a cancer of the soul. "Stewardship unclenches the knotted hand, relaxes the rigid arm, and clarifies the muddled heart."—Herman Weber.

TOPICS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE'S SOCIETIES

CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR: Y. P.—Youth Evangelism. How can I make Christ attractive to Others? Matt. 5:14-16.
Jr.—What Does my Church Stand For? Eph. 2:19-22.
LUTHER LEAGUE: Sr.—How a Christian "Takes It." II Cor. 4:8-18.
Y. P.—How a Christian "Takes It" with God's Help. II Cor. 4:8-18.
Inter.—What Is Sin? Rom. 14:23. James 4:17. I John 3:4.
WALTHER LEAGUE: March Topic—Missions. Youth in the Mission Field. Survey of Home Missions.

MARCH, FIFTH SUNDAY

CALL TO WORSHIP: "Oh, praise Jehovah, all ye nations; laud Him, all ye peoples. For His loving kindness is great toward us; and the truth of Jehovah endureth forever. Praise ye Jehovah."
PSALM: 91.
PRELUDE: Lenten Supplication—*Dittrich.*
ANTHEM: Schan him nach Golgatha—*Silcher.*
OFFERTORY: Laments—*Saint George.*
POSTLUDE: Finale—*Harris.*
OFFERTORY SENTENCE: "Brethren, we beseech and exhort you in the Lord Jesus; that, as ye received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, even as ye do walk, that ye abound more and more. For ye know what charge we gave you through the Lord Jesus."
OFFERTORY PRAYER: Through Thy guidance, O Lord, we have the privilege of gathering in Thy house, to sit at Thy table, learn Thy ways and grow in grace. These gifts of Thy love we offer, knowing that through our measure of giving of that which we have in great abundance, we may aid Thy plans for man on earth and in heaven. Amen.
BENEDICTION: Look therefore carefully how ye walk, not as unwise, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Depart in peace.

SERMONS

THEME: ***A Question That Must Be Answered.***

PAUL D. LEEDY, LL.B.

TEXT: "What have I to do with Thee, Jesus? . . ." Mark 5:7.
HYMNS: "Jesus, Thou Joy of Loving Hearts."—*Quebec, L. M.*
"Jesus Calls Us, O'er the Tumult."—*Galilee,* 8, 7, 8, 7.

There is a sense of imperative obligation in the verb: "One question that *must* be answered." Here is a query that was first propounded by a madman who dwelt among the tombs. It is an interrogation that has repeatedly presented itself to generation after generation. The answer to it immediately proclaims your philosophy of living and exposes your spirit for personal evaluation. "What have *I* to do with thee?" The matter is direct and personal. It penetrates and brings to a focus the rays of truth upon the deepest motives of our hearts. Its truthful answer must frequently force a candid, and often unpleasant confession from our lips.

The reason many people have so little to do with Jesus is simply because the Jesus of so many of us is not consequential enough to engage our best thought and major concern. We are the pale reflections of the God we serve. If our God is not large enough to command our lives, we are frequently spiritual pygmies serving a diminutive god. In the same way, most of us are not serving a Jesus who is super-engaging and completely irresistible so far as we are personally concerned. The conventional Christ of the everyday world is commonly a neutral entity. We seldom feel his tugging at our souls. He is the objective Christ of theology, the Christ of conformity, the Christ of history, or the Christ of any one of a thousand other segments and sections of life. We need to turn from this partial Christ of monastic, theological and modern invention and see again that Jesus who was so puissantly real that St. Paul felt that at his name all creatures in heaven and earth and under the earth should do him homage. It is the veritable Manhood of God that

we need to discern in days like these, and that Manhood demands the finest that we possess. Alfred Tennyson has caught the vision:

> "Thou seemest human and divine
> The holiest, highest manhood thou:
> Our wills are ours, we know not how;
> Our wills are ours to make them thine."

What have we to do with him? We must have a very great deal to do with him if life, and the cherished possessions of life are to endure for an era yet unborn. Let us look at his program for days like these, and for a humanity that is giddy in chasing ephemeral Utopias.

First, Jesus was a man of great, homely, simple truth. He must have learned in that little Nazareth carpenter shop a great deal of solid, homespun philosophy regarding life. In this sophisticated age we have looked with scorn, in no small degree, upon some of the very beautiful, basic, simple things that Jesus taught. But we shall not get very far in the building of a new society until we accept his plan of life where the foundation rests upon the eternal substrata of a godly home, devout parenthood, and a proper respect for the temple of the Most High. These, and a host of other teachings of Jesus, are very simple precepts, but they are very challenging as well. They test the stuff of which we are made, and whether we have the courage as a generation to live them. It was upon these simple, godly virtues that our nation was built.

It does not require much character to take the line of least resistance, either individually or socially. It is not very commendable that many of our church members have forsaken the altar merely because some lame excuse serves as a shield for their lack of spiritual virility; or that our domestic relations court dockets are crowded merely because fathers and mothers cannot learn to live with each other and their families; or that we are a nation that lives with open disregard for the age-old sanctities: the sacredness of the Sabbath, scorn for old-fashioned temperance, and flagrant disrespect for parental authority. We cannot behave like that, and have very much to do with Jesus!

Again, Jesus learned the infinite power of the small and insignificant. He was always emphasizing it. He took notice of the lowly widow who brought her mite to the temple treasury. He praised the beauty of a despised Samaritan's deed. His parables abound with references to small things: mustard seeds, sparrows, the yeast plant, and grain that a sower scattered over different kinds of soil. We are engulfed in a civilization where bigness is the measure of importance. Not so with Jesus. His creed was that the world is ultimately ruled by the minute and infinitesimal. In its very structure the physical universe is composed of very small particles, atoms, which science declares could they be harnessed would provide power enough to run the world. The mighty ocean is identifiable with majesty, depth, and vastness only because of the confluence of myriads of trickling streams, each themselves born of the lowly raindrop. When infinitesimals join hands the mighty deep results. The great is but the accumulation of the small.

How true this is in the realm of the spirit. Jesus was everlastingly fussy over the slightest imperfection in a man's soul. Take the case of the rich young ruler. Outwardly he was a paragon, but he had a very small fault.

And Jesus realized that a little selfishness would choke the bottle-neck of the spirit in even a prince among men.

We must be very vigilant about every little blemish that would mar the purity of life or soul if we are to claim seriously to have much to do with Jesus!

We must also remember that we ought to have a great deal to do with him in the sheer courage of living in this modern scheme of things. This is not the easiest era in which to have been born. It is an age filled with Gethsemanes and Golgothas, and with crosses looming in the distance. But even on Calvary he was still the Godhead, the Son of his Heavenly Father.

I am reminded that in every Christian group there is still one prayer that devout spirits utter. It begins, "our Father." This is a strange beginning and seems unmistakably to imply that we must have a very peculiar relationship to God. We are his sons. We do not think much about this holy distinction in these days. It is what St. Paul referred to as "our high calling." We should consider very prayerfully its sacred implications. We cannot have much to do with Jesus if we do not appear to be also like him, who is also a Son of God.

And so this one question that must be answered still abides. We cannot be indifferent to it. It is a searching, penetrating, uncomfortable question, but it presses persistently in these days for a reply. And by facing it courageously and answering it sincerely we shall be given the opportunity to "search our own hearts" and to estimate the essential Christian content of our own lives.

"What have *I* to do with thee, Jesus?"

Fifth Sunday in Lent (Judica).

THEME: *Paradox of Christ and His Crucifixion.*

C. IRVING BENSON, D. D., MELBOURNE.

TEXT: John 8:46-59.
HYMNS: "Thy Life Was Given for Me."—*Waltham,* 66, 66, 66.
"In the Cross of Christ I Glory."—*Rathbun,* 87, 87.

The Christian Gospel of the Cross is an amazing paradox. A cross is two pieces of wood nailed together to make an instrument of death by torture. It carried originally no association but those which a decent mind would shun. The crucifixion of Christ might well have been remembered as the crowning infamy of human history. By what psychological reversal did it come to be regarded as a thing of glory?

Dr. W. R. Maltby thinks slowly and carefully. No one could hear him without being impressed by the tidiness of his mind; there are no loose ends, no gaps, no evasions. Dr. Maltby points out that the Christian Church has never formulated a doctrine of the Atonement. There have been many interpretations but all have proved at one point or another to be inadequate and therefore unserviceable. It is significant that there is no "orthodox" interpretation of the Cross which can claim the explicit authority of the Scriptures or of the Christian Church throughout the ages. This is important, not as indicating that it is beyond the range of human inquiry, but rather as leaving an open door for further inquiry and more light.

The Historic Jesus.

In his consideration of the Cross, Dr. Maltby goes to the first three Gospels and to the historic Jesus—a Figure "at once knowable and inexhaustible." The fact is well based historically that Jesus anticipated His death and forewarned the Apostles of the Crucifixion. They did not, however, receive it. "They understood none of these things, and this saying was hid from them, and they perceived not the things that were said." Dr. Maltby holds that what was being required of them was nothing less "than to exchange the temporal for the eternal, and to take up their abode in the unseen. This is not some precarious inference. It is not a question of a word here or a word there. The tone and mood of all the later chapters of our Gospels is prophetic of an end which was also a new beginning. . . . They were in one world and He in another. They were thinking of today and tomorrow. He was in the world of the eternal. Their horizon ended with their own country and their own time. The horizons of Jesus were all the world and all the centuries." For Him every passing event stood in its true context of the eternal. "No pre-occupation with the present obscured the history of the past or hid the significance of the future. He was concerned with the whole. . . . When the authorities were taking counsel to make away with Him, not knowing what they did, Jesus saw what they were doing and recognised it for what it was. It was only what their fathers had said and done before them. This was what men were; this was what they were to be saved from. . . . The 'stage' was now 'all the world,' and the players were 'all the men and women in it.' "

In the last week every event was dominated by "the widening of the horizons." This becomes most evident in the account of the Last Supper. The climax of that memorable meeting is to be found in the words. "This cup is My blood of the new Covenant which is shed for many."

Into the Everywhere.

From this examination of the Gospel records, Dr. Maltby draws two conclusions. "The first is that Jesus is shown as concerned with a far wider audience and His own contemporaries, and with a work that was nothing less than the salvation of the world. In all the closing scenes His purpose has outrun the calendar days; the horizons have widened to the scale of the infinite. The barriers of time and place have gone down for His mind. Already He is passing from the here into the Everywhere; from His own age to all the ages: from His own people according to the flesh to that new family which He was to gather from all the earth. . . .

"The second conclusion is that, after a certain point in the history, Jesus with increasing intensity and concentration pressed on to Jerusalem and a foreseen death, which was to be, not the failure of his purpose nor its end, but the way to its consummation. His adversaries had made their choice and knew what they wanted. But He took the situation into His own hands: the time and the place were of His choosing. At every stage His redeeming purpose outshone their pitiable deed, and from the beginning the Cross bore His meaning, not theirs."

Why Did He Die?

In the first place Jesus offended His contemporaries at the sensitive point of their patriotism. The patriotism of Jesus was not that of His contemporaries. "He would have turned His people away from all their hopeless dreams of disputing with Rome for material sovereignity, and recalled them to their true vocation, which was the spiritual leadership of mankind. The mark of Jewish patriotism was to hate the Romans. Jesus told them to love their enemies. . . ." A second count of their indictment against Jesus was that He seemed to the religious authorities to be undermining the very foundations of religion.

"It was not through the superlative wickedness of specially malignant men that Christ died." "Those who were responsible actively or passively were fairly representative of the respectabilities. Religion, the bond-slave of patriotism, patriotism corrupted by contempt, prestige defending itself, inertia disturbed into action, insincerity exposed—such things are part of the story of mankind, and they supplied the motives for the putting to death of Christ."

Coming to the question as to why Christ laid down His life, Dr. Maltby emphasises the quality of His love—which persists against contempt and indifference which gives and receives nothing in return, which survives the disillusion of treachery and still refuses to despair. Jesus determined to use His death—which He knew that one way or another was near—as a manifestation of His mission and of God's will. He knew, further, that death would not release Him from His vocation or end His work, but that it would free Him by the way of resurrection from human limitations, and put all authority and power in His hands. "Therefore we see Him hastening to Jerusalem and to death, because He was also hastening to the Resurrection and fullness of life and power."

For Better or Worse.

He went up to Jerusalem to challenge human sin. Sin, in turn, challenged His love. When sin had flung its last dart and said its last word, He answered them from His Cross. Dr. Maltby dares to say that, "He there betrothed Himself for ever to the human race, for better for worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health. Seven words from the Cross are reported, but there was another, which said: 'I will never leave you nor forsake you.' It was said by the only begotten Son of God with full purpose of heart, and it has never been unsaid. That pledge stands for ever, and binds Him to our race in its deepest need. It binds Him: it confronts us. Every one of us must reckon with that word—or, rather, with the One who said the word. I may deny it; I may ignore it; I may never have heard of it; but it stands. If I sit in the courts of the House of the Lord, I may sing, 'He loved me and gave Himself for me.' But if I choose to sit at the table of harlots, and steep myself in sin's delirium, it is still true that He loves me and gave Himself for me, and His presence I cannot escape."

The Christ of the Cross.

Christ Himself is our salvation, and the New Testament knows no other. Our salvation is not in His death, nor in His rising, but in Himself, Who

died and rose again and abides with all who believe in Him. Many of our difficulties in arriving at a true interpretation of the Cross of Christ are due to our putting asunder what the New Testament has joined—the life and death and life again of our Lord Jesus. "Today it may be more needful in certain positions to preach the Christ of the Cross than the Cross of Christ."

Dr. Maltby has given us a vital study of the Cross which will take its place among the few really great books on the subject in our language. It is the deeply reverent offering of a lover and a thinker, and the burning devotion of some of his pages cannot be read in a study chair—they drive a man to his knees.

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

Christ's Commission.

LESSON: Luke 24:36-53.

GOLDEN TEXT: "Behold, I send forth the promise of my Father upon you." Luke 24:49.

DEVOTIONAL READING: Isaiah 52:7-12.

INTER. & SR. TOPIC: Witnessing for Jesus.

Y. P. & ADULTS: The Christian Message and Mission.

The ascension of our Lord occurred on Thursday, May 18th, A.D. 30, and was from the Mount of Olives near Bethany.

The appearances of Jesus after His resurrection may be outlined and followed.

On the day of the resurrection—to Mary Magdelene (Mark 16:9 and John 20:11-18).
To the women returning from the sepulchre (Matt. 28:9, 10).
To Simon Peter alone (Luke 24:34).
To two disciples going to Emmaus (Luke 24:13-31).
To the Apostles excepting Thomas (John 20:19-25).
On the following Sunday—to the Apostles, Thomas being present (John 20:26-29).
Appearances in Galilee between April 16 and May 18—to the seven disciples fishing (John 21:1-13).
To the eleven disciples on a mountain (Matt. 28:16-20).
To above five hundred brethren at once (I Corinthians 15:6).
Appearances in Jerusalem—the middle of May—to James only (I Corinthians 15:7).
To all the Apostles at His ascension (Luke 24:50, 51 and Acts 1:6-12).

Luke records only the appearances in the vicinity of Jerusalem. All of the appearances to the larger numbers were in Galilee.

Verses 36-43 belong to the fifth appearance of Jesus as outlined above. His purpose in this appearance was to demonstrate that He was the very same Jesus with the same body which they had known in life which was crucified three days before.

In verses 44-47 Jesus opened the understanding of the Apostles. "These events," He says, "pertaining to My death and resurrection, are the fulfillment of My words. While they may have been staggering to your faith, these events should be the means of strengthening it because they are the fulfillment not only of what I told you beforehand should take place but what was foretold ages ago in the Scriptures."

Verse 45 speaks of His opening their understanding. It is only to the devout souls sincerely seeking light that the Holy Book speaks.

Verse 48 speaks of witnesses. A witness is one who knows, who has had first hand and personal experience. "Sayest thou this of thyself, or did others tell it thee of Me," are the words of Christ to Pilate. They might well be applied to every Christian.

A specialist, just beginning practice, cured without charge a poor laborer. For pay he asked only that the cured man tell everyone who had cured him. The grateful fellow did this so thoroughly that the physician's office was soon thronged and his fame became world-wide. Ought we not to do as much for the Great Physician who has healed us?

The commission which the Lord gives to His disciples is accompanied by a promise of the necessary power—verse 49.

EVENING SERMON

THEME: *Great Hours in Life.*

GEORGE MCPHERSON HUNTER, D. D.

TEXT: "Who knoweth whether thou art come to the Kingdom for such a time as this." Esther 4:14.

The story of Mordecai and Esther is the tale of a man's love for his people and a woman meeting her great hour. The fate of thousands lay in the hands of a dark eyed, eager girl, only she did not know it. She knew there were rumors abroad about some dark deed pending. Her people, the Jews, were in danger of extermination, and Mordecai told her to go into the king's presence and beg for the life of her people.

But a law said no one could enter the king's presence under penalty of death, unless commanded.

Mordecai puckered his beetling eyebrows, fire darted from his eyes. "You think," said he, "you shall escape in the king's house more than all the Jews?" Then he challenged her, "Who knoweth whether thou are come to the kingdom for a such a time as this."

Esther was afraid. Her position in the court was lofty. "My place is first in the land. I set the fashions. The first wife is honored, safe, and far removed from the smelly Jewish rabble, under condemnation. Risk what I have gained. Why should I? These Jews do not know me. They are nothing to me." But Mordecai's words rang in her ears. The blood of Abraham in her cried out. Hebrew prophets spoke from the past.

At night mute little hands reached out to her. A procession of haggard, reproaching men seemed to walk by her bed.

Morning light brought no respite. Even the birds twittered, "Who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this."

Great Hours in Life:

Queen Esther, and all the rest of us, have hours in life when the future hangs in the balance. Past, present, and future wait on our decisions. Hours when we stand facing a decision. Then we are tried as by fires which the providence of God has kindled.

With the Queen the hour of decision came suddenly like a midnight cry. When she was pinnacled in glory, bedecked with jewels, flattered by courtiers, fawned upon by servants, favorite wife in a king's harem. Surely it was mockery to ask her to stoop down and save her own poor, scattered people.

If we knew when our big moments were on us, we might brace ourselves for the ordeal.

If heralds announced the hours of momentous decisions had come, we would be ready.

With Queen Esther it rose with dramatic suddenness, full of poignant possibilities, when the weal of her people was in her hands.

With us the scenery and setting may be different; on a street corner, with blinking lights, in an office, in fields, or in the holy hush of worship when everything sensate falls away, and we are called to say, yes, or no.

But a merciful God hides from us most of the trailing consequences of our decisions. Our decisions are like steamers ploughing through the ocean, they leave a long white wake of foam behind them.

Thanks be to God this can be our confidence. He will never allow us to walk in a path, where his feet have not gone before. He trod these paths in sorrow that we might tread with joy.

Great Hours, Ordeals of Life.

In the olden days warriors were vindicated before men, by the ordeals ascribed for the purpose.

No man can face a great decision, without the act of facing it leaving some mark on his soul.

Martin Luther's declaration before the Edict of Worms, "Here I stand so help me God," was a decision that marked him, as called into the world, for such a time as the Reformation. By temperament, training, and experience God fitted him for the day when he would turn the face of Europe up to God.

When the air raids were common over a European capital, the city was described as a city of "upturned faces."

Life's decisions are ordeals, when our faces are turned upwards from the earth to the skies, from the dust to the stars; when we stand alone, face God with our own souls unbared.

Just then we are worth most to God and our fellows.

Queen Esther was worth more to God, in the ordeal of decision, about whether she would dare venture into the king's presence, and plead for mercy on them, than for any other purpose in the world.

In that ordeal for one fateful hour she was pinnacled in splendor, with her face turned away from King Ahasuerus in all his glory and pomp, and upward to the invisible God. And once a year, since that hour when she made her decision, the Jews all over the world lift up their eyes in the Feast of Purim, and thank God for her decision.

Great Hours Decide Elections.

In Queen Esther's decision, lay life and death for her people. She only could influence the King. It was the hour when she saw her vocation reserved for her.

From that time she could say, "I have been elected to save the Jews."

Election, in simple language, is a man or woman, discovering that God has something for them to do, that no one else in the world can do.

If you come from Europe you must declare yourself, and all that you have to the customs officer. This hour of worship is one when we can declare ourselves for Christ, and his kingdom, and the decision affects the character for time and eternity.

Esther was called to declare herself, and in doing so saved herself, her family, her people, and the decision revealed her election. When she said, "I will enter and plead for my people," she was in the noble order of the elect.

All the powers of darkness, her own inclination, the seductive surroundings of her court, everything conspired against her going in and facing the voluptuous king. "Would she go?"

There are crucial moments in life, when great issues depend on our decisions, and these are the hours when our calling and election are sealed.

Hours glorious in their opportunities, inexorable in their claims, tragic in their sacrifice, and irrevocable in our judgments, when we feel we are born for this hour.

Poets and lovers have no doubts about their election.

> "Born for nought else but to expressly mark
> The music of her dear delicious ways.
> Born to perish meanly in the dark
> Yet born to be the man to sing her praise."

Born for nothing else but this hour my spirit tells.

Born for nothing else, lovers are never afraid of the dogma of election. Lovers of God, should not be bashful in declaring their election to serve the Redeemer. Born for the mystic hour when I am called to gird my loins, light my lamp and walk with God.

Born like Esther, for a life of sacrifice to expiate sins I never committed, and atone for the transgressions of another.

There are some born for the hour when they realize they were prepared, not for service, but sacrifice. Born and trained for the crowd, and called to walk in darkness, loneliness and obscurity.

And the noblest hour in any life is to discover one is born for nothing else but to surrender to God.

Then there is peace for time and eternity.

MID-WEEK SERMON

THEME: ***Like Unto a Businessman.***

TEXT: Matthew 13:45.

"The Kingdom of Heaven is like unto a trader."—Moffatt. Then my friend the businessman is right when he says the Church must adopt business principles in the prosecution of its great task. And what of the individual Christian in his pursuit of Christianity? Is he not to be just as keen in his pursuit of Christ as of the Dollar? 'Business principles' in the spiritual life? If not, what shall we say of the principles?

Like Unto a Businessman: Jesus evidently approved of this businessman. He draws his picture before us and says, in substance, "He who seeks the Kingdom of Heaven should be like him." Here are qualities of character to admire and to acquire. This man knows what he wants and sets himself to secure it. Jesus calls him a 'seeker'. The really valuable things of life are found by the seekers, the workers, whether it be in Business, Society, or Religion.

Business Qualifications: Vision, breadth of outlook. An eye for markets every hour in every change of human experience. Watchful of trifles, keen on details. He knows businesses are made or ruined by details. So also in religious life. Lowly duties. Common courtesies. "Faithful in that which is least." Doing little things in a great way and making great discoveries concerning God and Man and Self. Systematic, method and order. Not only principles but rules. Not only a general system, but detailed order. No one builds a religious life by fits and starts, or when they feel like it, or when they wait 'the moving of the spirit.' Decision. "The habit of firm decision is indispensable to a man of business." Also true in the man of religion. Matthew 8:19-22.

Seeking the Best: This businessman was seeking the best in his line. He might have chosen to collect junk, but he decided to acquire pearls. Religious life should be a seeking for the best things, "one pearl of great price." This man was not to be turned aside. Judas. Demas. When he found it he bought it, at the cost of all his possessions. True, high religion costs all that we are.

TOPICS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE'S SOCIETIES

CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR: Y. P.—Evangelism. How Can I Meet Objections to Becoming a Christian? I Pet. 3:15-18. Col. 4:6.
Jr.—What Has My Church Accomplished? Acts 11:19-30.
LUTHER LEAGUE: Sr.—American Missions. Acts 1:8.
Y. P.—Same.
Inter.—How to Get Rid of Sin. I John 1:8-9.
WALTHER LEAGUE: March Topic—Missions. Service Project. Canvass community. Show Missions Film or schedule lecture.

FOR THE BULLETIN BOARD

Our world is the world we make it to be. Don't criticize. Labor.
When will your heart be in flower?
Witness the power of God. See and do.
The soul finds joy in praise and prayer.
The ten Commandments and the Golden Rule still hold. Both are necessary.
The Golden Rule, if practiced, would solve your every problem.
No room for differences at the foot of the Cross.
When it uses no hands it matters not whether a clock runs or stands.

APRIL, FIRST SUNDAY

CALL TO WORSHIP: "I will praise the Lord with my whole heart, I will show forth all Thy marvellous works. I will rejoice and be glad in Thee: I will sing praises to Thy name, O Thou most high."
PSALM: 143.
PRELUDE: Hosannah—*Faulks.*
ANTHEM: Ride On—*Scott.*
OFFERTORY: Meditation—*Leybach.*
POSTLUDE: Jubilate Deo—*Silver.*
OFFERTORY SENTENCE: "Charge them that are rich in this present world, that they be not highminded, nor have their hope set on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, Who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, that they be ready to distribute, willing to communicate."
OFFERTORY PRAYER: O Heavenly Father, melt our hearts, open within us a fountain of joy and responsiveness to the needs of Thy children. If we have accomplished any good thing, if we have held close to our post of duty in times of temptation, if we have carried a brother unto the light of Thy presence, fill our hearts with joy for having understood a little of Thy teaching. Use these gifts as a token of our willingness to continue our apprenticeship to Thee.
BENEDICTION: "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit."

SERMONS

THEME: *God's Place in Man's Life.*

J. STANLEY DURKEE, D. D.

TEXT: "But seek ye first . . . the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these other things shall be added unto you." Matt. 6:33.
HYMNS: "Jesus, Saviour, Son of God."—*Aus Der Tiefe Rufe Ich,* 77, 77.
"We sing the Praise of Him Who Died."—*Wareham, L. M.*

We, in our best moments, are conscious of our infinity. We know that we were born for a higher destiny than earth. We know that the limitations which grip us in the physical life shall be destroyed and in that spiritual life we shall have range eternal to accomplish all those things for which the heart reaches even here amid our present limitations. It was Immanuel Kant, our greatest of philosophers, who said that there are certain questions which we must ask as human beings because they grow out of the very nature of our living, itself. We must ask them; we cannot help it. At the same time, we can never answer them because they demand a knowledge which is revealed only beyond the ken of human knowledge and human understanding. Frequently there comes to each one who thinks with a yearning mind, that some day he shall be released from the imprisonment of his spirit and limitations of his earthly life. "Out through the outmost gates of space, past where the gray stars drift to widening Infinite, our souls sail on a vessel swift." It will be a glorious voyage; it will be a wonderful arrival; it will be to a city everlasting, making answer to hope, ever reaching and ever yearning, until the eons of the eternities of God are forgotten and time shall be no more.

Now the tragedy of human life is that so few people realize that, or ever give themselves to its contemplation. What could we make of this life if we were keyed to thoughts and truths like that. I have said to you before that in my judgment in all literature there is nothing that so expresses this yearn-

ing and this defeat like those words of Queen Guinevere in Tennyson's Idylls of the King. She has fled from the broken kingdom, and the king and his army defeated. She is hiding in a Convent and as the echo of the footfall of the king approaches, she shrinks lower down into the corner covering her face with her hair and drawing her cloak around her as if she would hide herself from the fire of his burning spirit. He speaks to her: he tells her that her life has brought red ruin and the destroying of law. Then he turns and as his footfall dies away, she cries,

> "I thought I could not breathe in that fine air,
> That pure severity of perfect light—
> I yearn'd for warmth and color which I found
> In Lancelot—now I see thee what thou art,
> Thou art the highest and most human too,
> Not Lancelot, nor another. Is there none
> Will tell the King I love him Tho' so late?
> . . . . Ah my God,
> What might I not have made of thy fair world,
> Had I but loved thy highest creature here?
> It was my duty to have loved the highest;
> It surely was my profit had I known;
> It would have been my pleasure had I seen.
> We needs must love the highest when we see it,
> Nor Lancelot, nor another."

Will you note those three great words used: "It was my *duty* to have loved the highest." Don't make any mistake; there it is today, here, firm, and unyielding *duty*. "It would have been my *profit* had I known." It is always profit. "It would have been my *pleasure*, had I seen." Would we key our thoughts and purposes to thoughts and truths like these, the small and insignificant things of life would drop back into their places of littlenesses and the great fundamental truths of life would come living forward.

It is over a road something like this that we find ourselves now stumbling, as we come to this text of the morning. It is as if we had found a great seam of gold in the rocks, but the formation that there was dipped too far into the depths below. Seek ye first the things that are first and the second things will find their rightful places. Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things spoken of in the reading will be added unto you.

Will you note first that God is the highest conception of life and its goal. God is the creator of all things. He began His creation by calling light into existence. He ended that part of His creation by creating a mother and in that lies the supremacy of the thought of God in His creation.

God is our Father. What do you mean? A few days ago I heard a modern preacher, Dr. Morgan, tell of his experience and call to the ministry of Jesus Christ. He was a young man, a puddler in an iron mill, finding God at twenty-one, and at twenty-three following that strange command. Not being able to read or write he began a career of eager study that in six years gave him a degree from college. When asked if he would become a Christian he always replied he would if he could become as good a Christian as his father. Is God like a human father? Can I sit down with God and talk

with Him as to a human father? Can I get from God reactions to my needs and longings and questions, and will God answer me with the love that my father would answer me, and seek to guide me? That is the meaning! Like as the father loveth his children, so the Lord loveth them who are His. He is their Father.

God is the goal of human living. We turn to God as naturally as the flower lifts its face to the sun, as rivers to the oceans run. Every human heart cries out for God. Never was there a pure atheist. There never was, there never will be a man or woman who believes absolutely that there is no God. In every case recorded in history of such atheists, they have betrayed their profession by their acts. Why even Robert Ingersoll standing by the grave of his boy cried out as he sought through the darkness and despair for some help that would flood into his soul. God is the goal of all our thinking and yearning.

Second, how great may one become in his reach toward God or toward evil propensities. Look at the world today! Answer for yourself as you call the roll of those who are disappointed because of their inhuman desire to dominate and be supreme. How great? Greater than any in history who have betrayed every love, every truth, every honor, and have lifted up their eyes in Hell, crying out for the Eternal.

How great may we become in our reaching after righteousness?

> "He drew his marble veined with fire
> From quarries of his deep desire.
> He chiseled it with edge of thought
> To beauty he had vainly sought."

In each one of us are those mines of marble. In each one of us are those powers of edged thought. In each one of us is that spiritual man of action who cries, Oh God, we seek Thee as our example to live by. I am fond of saying to you, that when God wanted the Tabernacle builded in the wilderness, He called Moses to Him, away from the crowd and said, "Make that Tabernacle so long, so wide, so high, with such and such finishings." When He had given him all the instructions in detail, He said, "See that thou make all things like the pattern shown to thee in the mount." But God never says that to any young men and women today. He has a subtler way. He places Jesus Christ before us and forces us to examine him with all the power of our reason, with all the skepticism of our being, with all the inquiry of the living, until we say, as they said in His day, "we find no fault in Him." Then God says to us, "Go make your lives like the life of the Man!" Jesus says greater works than I have done shall ye do, because I go to my Father and leave you the holy spirit to make you strong for your work.

I think a third question that may naturally come to us is this: Is that potential greatness temporal or eternal? In other words, is immortality a gift or an acquirement? Is it just because we are human that we are immortal or must we do something to gain our immortality? I have gone carefully over and over and over the texts and scriptures that have to do with that great thought, and I say to you that, in my judgment, the preponderance of opinion in the old Bible is that we must do something if we become

immortal. Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life, he that believeth in me though he were dead yet shall he live; and he that liveth and believeth in me shall never die." Does that mean that he who does not live and believe in Jesus, may find his mortality with his present life here? He may not mean that. But I say to you frankly that we are the most unwise people imaginable if we neglect to accept Christ and the life eternal which He does give and absolution of our sins for those futures which are to be. I can well understand some people not wanting eternity because they have made such a mess of time. A woman said to me once that, "the only immortality in which I believe is that some thoughts that I have expressed in the world will live after I am gone." A modified immortality certainly. I can well understand why some people, destroying the image of God in them, going back to the brute, live in brute likeness. I can understand why people like that may not want immortality and glorious eternity. But for you who serve and you who climb and reach for the nobler; you who are anxious to find that something within you and contact it for eternity; and you who have grown in the thought of immortality which we may approach at least through the acceptance of the life of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

You want your eternal life! So we come to the question that introduces the text of the morning; "What is God's place in man's life?"

I answer first in man's life, is God's place. Can it be that you have not kept step with him, have not walked with him and talked with him? In law, God is first. Hear this lawyers! Go back to the Psalm that reads, "the law of the Lord is perfect." We have a lot of laws that are not perfect but of course they are given because of imperfect men and women who are doing fairly well but not as well as they ought to do. "The testimony of the Lord is sure." Yet we have laws that are a disgrace to decent thinking people. What is the place of God? First in life, first in love, first everywhere. Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these other things shall be added unto you. I think I have no sorrow greater than that which expresses itself when I see a man with a job that he fancies is not big enough for God too. It is too small a job when you do not feel that you need Almighty God as a partner in your business whatever it is.

"O young Mariner,
Down to the haven
Call your companions,
Launch your vessel,
And crowd your canvas,
And, ere it vanishes
Over the margin,
After it, follow it,
Follow The Gleam."

"Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you."

Let us pray.

PRAYER

We thank Thee, O God, that Thou dost show us the way and dost light it up and ever and anon along the way there are sign posts, and the lettering

there says, "this is the way." We need not take the byways and become lost because the ways of life are clearly marked and a voice is constantly calling to us that we come into the way of light and life everlasting. Grant to us this morning that we may see a bit clearer what life holds for us, what life means to us, and then, O God, strengthen us that we follow the gleam, that we follow the guide posts, that we follow the voice calling, until at last we shall be in the heaven land eternal, to follow on in Thine own everlasting life. Through Jesus Christ, Our Lord, Amen.

Palm Sunday.

THEME: *Christ's Triumphant Entry Into Cities and Souls.*

CHARLES HADDON NABERS, D. D.

TEXT: Matthew 21:10.
HYMNS: "All Glory, Laud, and Honor."—*Gloria*, 76, 76.
"Ride on! Ride on in Majesty."—*St. Drosdane, L. M.*

Nineteen centuries ago when a Caesar ruled the world from the city beside the Tiber, another King entered a Roman city in triumph. The city was Jerusalem, garrisoned by steel helmetted legionnaires with banners inscribed with the letters, "S.P.Q.R." This King came with no mighty army to open a trail for His subjects to follow. No trumpets heralded His coming from afar. No prancing horses pushed the populace out of the road to make way for the Ruler. No decorations were set out in advance to advertise His advent.

But there was a procession strange in the annals of Jerusalem, and unique in the lineage of rulers. From over in the direction of Olivet, the little hill just east of the city, came a group of faithful followers who surrounded the King. Mostly they were common folks to whom kings and nobles were unknown and by whom the vocabulary of royalty was never understood. They walked before, beside and after the King. The King Himself, the Teacher of Galilee, Jesus called the Christ, rode upon an ass, an animal associated with peasantry and toil rather than with royalty and pomp. Not only so, but the King Who at birth was laid in a borrowed cradle, and Who at death was laid in a borrowed tomb, rode for the only time in His earthly life upon a borrowed steed.

But there was music—the sweetest of all sounds, the voices of little children singing the Psalms of David, "Hosanna to the Son of David; blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest." If there were no carpets carefully laid before the King, the trees of the forest contributed their limbs, and the animal bearing the Christ walked upon a carpet of leaves and branches, nature's own springtime rug. If there were no banners with coats of arms of illustrious houses, there were branches from palm trees held high, and waved vigorously by those who would honor the King.

Into the city He came—the triumphant entry of Jesus into the city where carpenters, and He was the child of a carpenter's home, were reaching for timbers to make the Cross on which He would die before the end of another week.

The so-called Golden Gate, is now walled up, and nobody can enter the old city through its portals. Jerusalem fears that a king might come again to upset the routine of her humdrum life, and so she bars the gate through which her great Ruler once entered. Lives that have been successfully besieged by high hopes and lofty purposes, when they turn again to the lower levels, sometimes bar the high roads along which the monarchs of the spirit once entered. For cities and people it is the tragedy of choosing life on the bottom strata instead of on the spiritual peaks.

This pivotal story from the Gospel is the opening scene in the passion play as put on every ten years in the Bavarian village of Oberammergau. The opening scene shows the entrance of Christ into Jerusalem with the shouting of the multitudes, for practically every man, woman and child of the village is upon the stage during this scene. Later on in the play a mob is before the palace of Pilate screaming, "Crucify Him! Crucify Him!" and you recognize the same faces, and know that these same actors you saw in the opening scene waving palms and crying "Hosanna." For a moment you wonder why the village casting office did not assign different people to the utterly different scenes, until you remember that in the original story, back in the Jerusalem of the First century, the same crowd that cried for Him to be King, cried for Him to be slain. And the recognition of the same faces causes you to sob, for it is the story of the changeableness of human nature, and without God, the change is always in the wrong direction.

But the tale is a tale repeated again and again. Jesus is seeking to enter cities and hearts. His advent to many people causes no concern whatever. They know that something is happening, but they are not interested enough to investigate. Other people rejoice and become glad when they have an opportunity to testify to His presence, and to shout for joy as they come near to Him. Others display open hostility, and still others impede His progress all possible ways without arraying themselves against Him. Jerusalem slept that night for the most part unaware of the procession that moved from Olivet to the temple court. And it was the day of the city's greatest opportunity. It was the hour when the people had the final opportunity to make the King of the Universe their personal King, to accept the love of God, and to walk in the ancient ways of the Most High. They passed it up, some because they definitely wanted another sort of life, but the majority because they did not even know the opportunity had come.

Jesus is seeking to enter the cities of the western world, and His coming makes not even as much stir as it did in Jerusalem. He comes with a new consideration for the rights of every man, woman and child in the city. In His spiritual program there are no forgotten classes. The rich man cannot be haughty. The poor man cannot be bitter. Between the laborer and the capitalist there is no gulf. There is neither East nor West, no border nor breed nor birth, for in Christ we are all brethren.

But we build our spite fences and keep Him out. When somebody seeks to interpret His words to fit our generation instead of some distant age and far away region, we cry, "Disturber of the peace." We protest against the application of the Gospel as the men of a strange city protested against the coming of Paul, "They that turn the world upside down have come hither also," and we want nothing upturned, even if it be bot-

tom up at present. He comes with mercy upon His lips; with justice upon His forehead, with Truth upon His breast, with love unto His fingertips, and we complacently read the annals of the past, and write a letter to the daily newspaper vehemently fuming against any innovations.

When a very formal church found a very pious but poor man seeking admission to its membership some years ago, the officers postponed receiving the applicant, and asked him to pray about it and to come back later. This was done a second time, and again the third, according to the well-thumbed tale. On the third meeting of the officials of the church the applicant was asked: "Have you prayed about this matter?" The reply: "Yes." Another question: "Have you had an answer to your prayer?" "Yes, I have." Another question: "What was the answer?" The reply: "Christ told me to keep on and not to become discouraged for He had been trying unsuccessfully to enter this church for the past forty-five years."

Jesus is knocking at the door of individual lives. The Master wants entree to our souls. His ancient word is ever new: "Son, give me thine heart." Let the Master come in with His saving and sanctifying power, with His gracious living presence, with His truth in beauty, and His beauty in truth. And when He comes, He cleans out the cobwebs of littleness and indifference, and kills the poisonous spiders of sin and sordid living.

When the little merchant of Jerusalem returned home that evening his wife said, as all good wives say, "Well, Simon, what's the news? What did you hear, and what did you see?"

Simon answers, as all husbands yet answer: "Oh, nothing. Nothing happened all day. I saw a fellow with a crowd about him in the road leading to the temple, and a lot of noise, but I was busy with a customer who bought lentils, and it soon passed and things quieted down; I don't suppose there was anything to it. Where's the evening paper?"

When you sum up the proceedings of the day, and count assets and liabilities, you push aside the strange wistful longings, that Christ through the Spirit, sent to knock upon the door of your soul. You consider only the brown pennies, the white dimes and quarters, and the crinkly paper dollars in the till, and measure the day by such alone. Such a day is even more tragic than if you had met and refused the Christ. He came, and you did not recognize Him! The radio of your soul was tuned to a lower wave length, and your life heard not the Voice of the King!

PASTORAL PRAYER

Stealing from the world away, Lord, we come to seek Thy face. Kindly meet us here, we pray; grant us Thy reviving grace. We bring our burdens with us this morning though we endeavor to leave them at the door or on the street. Into the quiet and safety of Thine own dwelling place do we bring our tired, our wounded hearts, our sorrows, our disappointments, our fears. We would pile them up here before the altar in Thy sight knowing so well because of experience of the years gone that when we share our burdens and sorrows and fears with Thee that somehow we lose them. The loads slip from the shoulders, the pain goes out of the heart, the yearning is gathered up into a new love, and we find our strength renewed while we wait and worship here.

What a morning! What a glorious morning in which to come to the House of God. All nature smiles upon us today. The delicate frost fingers are moving in the earth, unsealing and sealing jars of power so that when springtime comes, the grass will grow, the flowers will bloom, and birds will sing; lakes will lift up their faces to Thee with laughter, and all shall be glad because of the springtime once more. Bring springtime to our hearts today, O God, and let there be a releasing from any burden. Let each of us, understanding Thy will and our noblest endeavor, seek to do what Thou wouldst have us do. We grieve that we are distraught and worried over public affairs —the affairs of our own nation—and are inclined to be selfish with our own power, hiding here behind the Western seas and fancy that we are safe. Look down upon us in love and forgiveness this morning. Would that we could be in harmony with Thy will so that war would cease and hatred be done away with and the nations of the earth combine to honor God. Guide the thoughts of men, we pray Thee, that they be turned back to Thy way and will, that peace may come, that praise may reign, that sacrifices shall be rewarded with a new world order, a new redemption and the outward reach of our children's children toward the nobler and yet nobler things. Bless us each while we bow and worship here and may there come from this hour of worship, surcease from our care, release from our fears, a new hope that will sparkle in the eyes and laugh from the lips and heart and a strange love will fill our souls as we go to take up the tasks and duties which await us on the morrow. Grant our prayer and Thy blessing in the name and for the sake of Jesus Christ. Amen.

J. Stanley Durkee

Good Friday.

THEME: *The Three Crosses.*

FRANK B. FAGERBURG, D. D.

TEXT: Luke 23:33.
HYMNS: "In The Cross of Christ I Glory."—*Rathbun,* 8, 7, 8, 7.
"Beneath The Cross of Jesus."—*St. Christopher,* 76, 86, 86, 86.

Usually we think only of Jesus on Good Friday, the day of crucifixion. There were three men who bore crosses that eventful day—each giving his lesson to us now. There was Simon of Cyrene, a thief, and Jesus. In these three men we have the three types of cross-bearers in every age.

As Jesus is led through the streets in company with His captors He is compelled to carry His own cross. This was a common practice making the punishment as shameful as possible. As they come to the gate of the city, just ready to go out, there comes in from the outlying country a man named Simon. He is a native of Cyrene, a settlement on the northwest coast of Africa. It may be in the spirit of horse-play these soldiers stop the pilgrim and impress him into service. The cross is taken from the Master's shoulders and placed on the shoulders of Simon.

This man is hurrying into the city to meet a friend or fill some appointment and just happens into the way of the crucifixion party. How irritated he probably was. As he walked along, bearing the cross passersby did not know but what he was identified with this affair. How humiliating! We

do not know much about him, but Simon of Cyrene is to me the type of those who suffer without conviction. He had done nothing wrong; he was not bearing a cross for punishment. He had done no great good; he was not going out to perish in a righteous cause. He suffers neither from right nor wrong—but he suffers just the same. Simon is the type of the unmoral man,—not the *im*moral, but the *un*moral. He is just neutral, nevertheless he bears a cross.

Simon represents the great masses between the thieves and Saviours. All bear their crosses. Every man must bear some cross. He who rejects the Christian Way because it presents a cross is deceiving himself. Any way you take has its cross. To live is to suffer and no man is excused. There is a certain amount of pain and suffering which comes to all. It comes not because of noble deeds or wicked acts, but like Simon of Cyrene men just happen along and the cross is laid upon them. They have no choice in the matter.

No, Simon of Cyrene was not nailed to the cross. This type never is. The unmoral, indifferent man has no great convictions to die for; he is not tied up to any great purpose for which he is willing to give his life. He merely drifts and allows other men to die for Right and God,—while here and there he just happens along and is compelled to share the suffering.

"And with Him they crucified two robbers, one on the right hand and one on the left." Here is another type who suffered on a cross that day—a robber. He is the type of positive, aggressive wickedness. This man had a purpose, he was willing to risk his life for it, but it was a low and mean purpose. Sin always takes its toll—and its toll is a heavy one.

The third cross is the cross of Jesus. It is the type of affirmative and aggressive righteousness. He had a great moral objective, the noblest and the highest—and gave His life for its accomplishment. The good man must face the certain suffering which positive morality entails. There is no high endeavor, there is no achievement for God which does not bring its sacrifice and cross. But he who chooses this way knows he suffers for the highest and best and his cross becomes a joy.

The difference in human experience is not that one man sacrifices and another does not sacrifice. All men give pretty much the same but the real difference is in causes to which they sacrifice.

The drunkard makes a heavy sacrifice for his appetite. He spends money freely, he gives up his friends, he crushes the love of his dear ones, he breaks up his home—and at last may sacrifice his health or even his life. The noblest missionary does not give more. In choosing Christ and the Kingdom he sacrifices the chance for wealth, he must leave behind home and friends and loved ones. His choice may even estrange some who are dearest to him. Off he goes to the wilds of Africa or India. There in a rigorous climate he gives his health and at last lays down his life. What is the difference between the drunkard and the missionary of Christ? Both gave much the same. The distinction is in the ends to which they give—the crosses on which they suffer.

Some years ago there appeared an account in a western newspaper of the return to his home town of Albert H. Fall, Secretary of the Interior. It was

upon his head that the Teapot Dome Scandal first broke. This paper described his return a different man from the one who frequently had come back to his home. He was broken in spirit and in health. Almost too weak to walk, he tottered with his lone companion to the waiting taxicab. The usual throngs of townsmen did not greet him—no bands, no cheering. One inconspicuous citizen was there to see him home. It was the shame of a condemned man slinking to retirement.

With this, contrast a picture which was printed on the front page of a city newspaper in March 1921. It is a man standing on the steps of the White House. He too is broken in spirit and health—with white hair, pinched face and bowed shoulders. Yes, you have guessed—Woodrow Wilson—but a very different man from the tall, erect, black-haired scholar who entered the capital after the presidential campaign of 1912. But as he tottered with the help of two friends to his automobile, it was not to a retirement of shame, but into a home where dozens of friends daily paid him homage.

Albert H. Fall and Woodrow Wilson. Each one wrecked by the burdens and cares of public life. They gave the same thing—life and health. What is the difference? Only in the ideals to which they gave themselves, the crosses on which they chose to suffer.

Life holds a cross in store for you. I do not know when or how. I only know it is there. Which cross will it be? Shall yours be the cross of Simon of Cyrene, laid by chance upon your unwilling shoulders? Will it be the cross of wickedness which never fails him who sacrifices for self? Or will yours be the cross of Right and God and Christ?

Good Friday.

THEME: ***The Forsaken Man on the Cross.***

NORMAN E. NYGAARD.

TEXT: "Eloi, eloi, lama sabacthani." Matt. 27-46.
HYMNS: "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross."—*Breslau, L. M.*
"O Perfect Life of Love."—*Gorton, S. M.*

If I were inclined to question the sincerity of the writers of the four Gospels and the authenticity of the New Testament records concerning the life of Christ the seven words from the cross would draw me back to a realization of the fact that these Biblical writers, truth-seeking and truth-loving, have given us a genuine account of the life of Jesus Christ, Son of man and Son of God.

This I say because men who would write an account of some mythical figure whom they were attempting to deify would paint a picture of a placid Saviour, crucified perhaps but unagonized. Instead, we have in the account, as if wrung from the heart of the Master that altogether human cry of pain and sorrow, "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?"

You will notice that it is the only exclamation from the cross which is written in the Aramaic. It should not be assumed, however, that Jesus as He hung there used the stilted classical Hebrew, the Latin of His captors, or the Greek of the cultured folk of His day in His other utterances. Undoubtedly every word from the cross came from His lips in His mother

tongue, the Aramaic. However, in the reporting of the fourth word neither His auditors nor Matthew, who set the utterance down in his gospel, understood how or why Jesus could have uttered such words.

Can't you visualize Matthew checking up on the point with John who had been there, with Mary the mother of Jesus, and that other Mary? "Are you positive that is what He said? You are sure that you heard Him say, 'Eloi, eloi, lama sabacthani'? Surely the Christ could not have cried out so on the cross. Are you certain?"

And John would have returned, "Yes, I am certain. That is exactly what He said. With my own ears I heard Him." And Peter, perhaps, at whose inspiration Mark probably wrote the gospel which bears the latter's name and who had been skulking in the hills while his Lord was on the cross, would have asked one of the Marys if it was true that Jesus had broken out with such an exclamation. For Peter had been convinced that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of the living God, and here is a word which would seem to cast some doubt upon the relationship. " 'Eloi eloi, lama sabacthani.' Surely the Master could not have said that." "Ah, but He did," Mary, His mother would have replied, "I strained my ears to catch every word that He said. And I heard Him say that."

Reluctantly, therefore, these two gospel writers would have set down these words, adding their own translation. They did not understand how the Son of God could have uttered them. Hence their care to report them in the tongue in which they were spoken. But they felt that they had no right to delete this cry of agony from their report even though the explanation for it escaped them.

But—whether they understood it or not—does not the explanation lie in this fact: here is the Son of God, it is true, but here is also the Son of Man. And the Son of Man, spent with suffering, cries out in the agony of bruised, torn flesh, "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" The fact that Jesus was the Son of God lessened the pain not one whit. In truth it but heightened it, giving Him an increased sensitivity to suffering and to evil.

In the south-western part of our country there is a sect of Christians called 'the penitentes.' They are to be found in several tribes of Indians who live in that arid country. Fragments of Christianity have been combined in their worship with ancient aboriginal rites. Although forbidden by law, it is possible that even today some of these savage rites are still practiced. And the 'penitentes,' as a matter of fact, are to be found among many South American as well as Mexican and American Indians.

One of these rites has been crucifixion. Annually one of their number suffered himself to be hanged on a cross. And stoically he hung there without a sound escaping his lips. As with all Indians you could have burned him at the stake and he would have said nothing. From babyhood he had been trained in a stoicism that was brutish perhaps but also exceedingly noble. He had been trained to be well-nigh insensitive to pain. Jesus, on the other hand, was probably the most sensitive man who ever lived. Moved as few of us are at the sight of human need, touched by compassion and tender love, indignant when His Father's house is contaminated by traders,

He was truly susceptible to all the deeper, nobler emotions. He rejoiced with happy humanity at a wedding feast, but, though He would raise the man from the dead, He wept with the sorrowing sisters at the tomb of Lazarus, His friend. And so from that sensitive soul, deserted by humankind, and apparently deserted even by God, there comes that cry of agony, "My God! My God! Why hast Thou forsaken me?" But, as with His plea in the garden, "Let this cup pass from me," this, too, is conditioned by the later word, "Father, into Thy hands I commend my Spirit."

Perhaps we come to this Eastertide asking the same question, "Why didst Thou forsake Him?" for we have asked the question again and again in life. Confronted by flood, earthquake, or warfare, seeing untold suffering and perhaps agonizing ourselves, we have asked, "Why, O God, hast Thou permitted this? Have you left us? Are you deaf to all our prayers?" Sudden death strikes down a dear one. "Why, O God, has Thou forsaken us?"

Probably only the most compassionate, the most sensitive souls ever to find the answer. Only they are able to say with Jesus, "Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit." But Allen Eastman Cross has given us the answer in one of his beautiful poems—and it can only be translated into poetry—his "A Psalm of the Son of Man."

"Young and radiant, He is standing
As He stood at Salem's shrine;
Just a lad, a lad forever,
With a look and grace divine!
'Tell me how it is ye sought me?
Wist ye not my Father's plan?
I must be about His business,
Would I be a Son of Man.'

"I can see Him humbly kneeling,
As He knelt upon the hill;
While the waters hushed their music,
And the night grew bright and still:
'Brothers, tell me why ye sought me?
Wist ye not my Father's plan?
He must grow in grace and wisdom,
Who would be a Son of Man.'

"Like a flame His soul is striking
In His wrath at greed and shame;
'Ye have made a den of robbers
Of the temple of His name;
Know ye not His equal justice?
Wist ye not the Father's plan?
He must bathe His sword in heaven
Who would be a Son of Man.'

"I can see Him dying, loving
Unto death on Calvary;
His dear hands still pleading, praying
Worn and torn for you and me!
'Brothers, will ye scorn and leave me?
Wist ye not the Father's plan?
He must wear a crown of sorrow
Who would be a Son of Man!'"

If suffering is universal then Christ Himself must suffer. If He had to

suffer then would He have to plumb the very depths of man's despair. He must wear a crown of sorrow; yes, He must endure the fiercest agonies which humankind should ever know, if He is to be a Son of Man. Jesus reaches the heart of the world when He says in the common tongue of His people, "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?"

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

Christ Promises Power.

LESSON: Luke 24:48, 49; Acts 1. Print Acts 1:1-12.

GOLDEN TEXT: "But ye shall receive power, when the Holy Spirit is come upon you: and ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." Acts 1:8.

DEVOTIONAL READING: Isaiah 12:1-6.

INTER. & SR. TOPIC: Christ Promises Power for Winning Others.

Y. P. & ADULTS: Christ Promises Power for Our Task.

The title of this book means exactly what it says, the Acts of the Apostles, and these acts are really the acts of the Holy Spirit through the Apostles. The one great theme in every paragraph is "The Church Witnessing for Christ." Witnessing in that power which was promised and which was given. The teacher should emphasize that this witnessing was done by the common, every-day member of the Church. The great central theme of the entire Book of Acts is not so much the development of Christian life or the application of Christian truths as it is the work of preaching the Gospel.

Our lesson today forms the introduction to the book. The preaching was to begin in Jerusalem and was to continue as far as the imperial city of Rome. The supreme message: *the Resurrection of Christ.* The Christian Church today has architecture, art, eloquence, music, but lacks power in and over the world. The power of which the Lord speaks is the power that is to come to their spirits as the result of their receiving the Holy Ghost, and having received this power they are to *witness.* If we *see* Christ we shall not be able to refrain from bearing witness to the heavenly vision, any more than Paul was able so to do. Furthermore, this matter of witnessing was intended to take the whole of life. The value of every Christian life is that of positive and powerful testimony to the reality of the spiritual, the possibility of victory over evil and the beauty of the divine ideal in human life. Argument may be answered, theories may be debated, but a life is a positive witness.

The Triumphant Entry (Alternate Lesson).

LESSON: Luke 19:28-40.

GOLDEN TEXT: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord. Mark 11:9.

DEVOTIONAL READING: Psalm 24.

INTER. & SR. TOPIC: Why Jesus Rode Into Jerusalem.

Y. P. & ADULTS: The Purpose of the Triumphal Entry.

The triumphal entry of Jesus Christ into Jerusalem is recorded by all four Gospels. Jesus now for three days makes His final endeavors to persuade

the Jewish nation to accept Him as their Messiah and thus save themselves from destruction and become a great power for bringing in the Kingdom of Heaven among men. The city is filled with pilgrims from all parts of the country who have come up to the Passover feast. Spreading their garments in the way they recognize Him as King. So Jehu with the officers of the army of Israel who had chosen him to be their ruler walked upon the garments spread beneath his feet. (See II Kings 9:13.) It was a recognized custom and the significance of it was not lost upon the Jews. Others "kept cutting down branches" the imperfect tense to note continued action. The multitude *kept* crying, saying, "Hosanna" which is a rendering in the Greek letters of the Hebrew word, "Save, we pray." (See Psalm 118:25.) It does not mean "Save us," but "Save the king." The city was thoroughly moved by this demonstration. The Greek word indicates "shaken as by an earthquake."

One touching incident is related by Luke only. As the procession began to descend from the Mount of Olives and the glories of Jerusalem in all its splendor burst upon Jesus' view, He was overcome. He wept over the city. For He was standing on the very ground where in 70 A.D. the legions of Titus, the Roman conqueror, would be camped. Silence, desolation and death was in store for this city. Jesus still weeps over every soul which refuses to be saved and chooses the way of death.

The triumphal procession of our Saviour is still going on across continents and centuries and will continue. Might triumphs over right and truth is crushed, but God is still keeping watch over His own. Looking at the under side of the pattern, it seems confused, but He knows the design and is working it out. Read Revelation 5:12-13.

EVENING SERMON

THEME: ***What the Kingdom is Like.***

RICHARD BRAUNSTEIN, D. D.

TEXT: "Then said he, Unto what is the kingdom of God like? and whereunto shall I resemble it?" Luke 13:18.

The Kingdom of God is like many things good, true, lovely, inspiring, worthy of emulation, deserving of the widest publicity. Following the query of the text we read it is like a grain of mustard seed, like leaven. In other places we read it is like a merchantman seeking goodly pearls, like salt that has not lost its savor.

As we view the world scene today, we are puzzled that after twenty centuries of Christian propaganda, preaching and teaching by the most brilliant minds and regnant personalities, anti-Christian propaganda and anti-good prevail to harrass and destroy. Perhaps that is looking at the darkest side. It is not hard to see the tragic and sinister. It looms so large, it is so insistent, it is so clamorous. Yet this is not like the Kingdom of God. Because the kingdom of God is just the opposite to what we see. It is what the kingdom of God is like that should be given emphasis.

The poet Goethe exclaimed to a friend, "For God's sake tell me what you

believe, I have doubts enough of my own." Thus the author of this sermon might have spoken as he listened to private conversations and public utterances the past vacation period.

The warring gangsters, called Dictators in Europe and the murder rings and racketeers in our own land and man's inhumanity to man everywhere tempt us to become discouraged as well as disgusted. One begins to see the meaning of the phrase, spoken by the leading character in "The Green Pastures," namely, "It is sometimes discouraging to be God." Yes, indeed. However we do not think that God ever becomes discouraged, as one of His attributes is infinite patience and unbounded love. But those who stand before men and speak for God, being merely human, have every right to think if not act, despondent.

Yet it must be said, with greater stress now than ever before, that righteousness, because of its very nature, shall prevail. We may have no gift of prophecy but we do have the priceless heritage of history and experience to bolster us and help us carry on. The world does improve, bit by bit. Its story is good, better best. The picture we now see, because it looms so large, is like a canvas by some futurist or surrealist, a huge mural of twisted lines and distorted curves. But there are other pictures, finer galleries. Let us look at these instead.

Sin in all of its ramifications may make good tabloid and theatre, if only to show us how not to live. But the thumb-nail descriptions and the drama-like parables of the Christ, teaching His way of life are more convincing, because positive. He says "Do this and live." It is not "Do this and die."

A group of newspaper men made a grand tour of the Holy Land. When they stood at the foot of Mount Sinai, one of them, with an eloquent gesture toward the height of that sacred slope exclaimed: "We have swayed public opinion and influenced the people but it was Moses who scooped the world."

The Ten Commandments are not the diplomatic conversations and appeasement conferences on which so many depend. No. What keeps the world in equilibrium, is not what this or that man said, but what God said to Moses and what Moses handed down to posterity. A tottering world is held in balance by an irresistible force and irrepressible urge.

If we were going into the business of teaching public speaking and writing and show the technique of how to interest and influence people, we would insist upon our students striking the positive note. One cue for political aspirants is the stressing of personal objectives rather than the criticising of opponent's mistakes. One of our city Mayors, in a recent radio address gave us this cogent sentence: "I prefer So-and-So with his known faults to So-and-So with his unknown virtues." This was striking the positive note.

The Kingdom of God—any Kingdom—implies likeness. "The Kingdom of God is NOT like this," is not a good opening. "The Kingdom of God is like THIS" is arresting, holds attention, sustains interest. A man may become notorious by his negations but he can only become famous by his affirmations. The first may gain him a hearing. The second is the surer route for the winning of a following.

Preaching in its final summary, is not telling the world how bad it is. The world is well aware of that. Few, if any are unconscious of their shortcomings. Preaching at its best, is telling the world how good it may become.

The recital of some deed of heroism or sacrifice has a psychological effect. It is like leaven, working silently but potently and enables the listener to make comparisons. The reason—one reason at least—why the Master Preacher made the Pharisees angry toward Him was that He made the Pharisees angry with themselves.

Good works, work well done, honestly and faithfully executed, deserves praise. Commendation belongs to all who conscientiously strive. Your true teacher and superior does not drive. He leads. If there is any *drive* to a program or movement or platform it is the mutual confidence men have in each other. It is the art of understanding and appreciation one demonstrates toward another. Thus are men persuaded not goaded to further endeavor.

Thomas, who is doubting, wants to know that he has a chance to make good. Who does not? The bride of a month wants to know whether her husband loves her. He says, "I told you a thousand times." She says, "I know, but I want to hear you tell me." We discount flattery but every human being likes to be told that he is making good. It is not small wages that hurt. It is the fact that somebody, somewhere along the line, has neglected the grace of saying "Thank you."

The task of the modern prophet is as much revelation as it is instruction. Those who hear and obey instructions are few in comparison with those who see and imitate.

The Christian life is one of the most positive forces we know anything about. The Kingdom of God is LIKE a Christian, working in any sphere. Christianity is the Kingdom of God in action. It an animation disturbing and changing the thought and action of society. As somebody said: "Christianity is a journey from Chicago's west side to the lake front, or from New York's east side to Central Park . . . it is a song and a prayer on a street corner where traffic jars and humanity struggles; Christianity is a composure of soul when the ship is sinking. . . . It is obtaining forgiveness beyond the stars for murder, actual and merely planned, here on earth. . . . It is the endeavor to move mountains with a wish of the heart or the whispering wings of hope; it is the loss of everything but gumption and backbone and courage. It is believing with all one's being that there are some things better than others; that it is worth while to identify oneself with burning causes and ideals for the improvement of all mankind." The Kingdom of God is like that.

The personality of the man who has rendered service to his fellowmen enables his followers as a body to learn from his personal experience and example things that only genius could attempt from the printed page. Prophet, interpreter, pioneer, do much to lighten the world by their example. It is that training that enables a man to enjoy spiritual life and to use his ideals of honor and devotion as a means of influencing other men in the way of conduct. The scientific discoverer animates his pupils with his own spirit,—not by arguing as to the value of what they are to learn but by standing before the mass of men as one who has wrested secrets from the hitherto unknown.

Christianity discounts theories merely. Of course one must have the theory of living before attempting that living. But it is the life that counts.

The Kingdom of God is like a good example. This is the white, hot light which illuminates our text.

The Master Minds of all ages reflect, illustrate, the Kingdom of God in innumerable ways. The Kingdom of God is like the music of Beethoven, the heart of a mother, the compassion of Florence Nightingale, the essays of John Ruskin, the social justice of Jacob Riis, the architecture of Sir Christopher Wren and the missionary zeal of David Livingstone. It is like Evangeline Booth ministering in the slums, it is like Jane Adams dedicating her life to "The Spirit of Youth and the City Streets" and it is like William Gladstone wandering at night, in the back streets and alleys of London on errands of succor.

The Kingdom of God is like the zeal—it is the zeal—of the scientific investigator in his battle against disease and the adventurous daring of the explorer seeking new and strange horizons on which to plant his flag.

The Good Neighbor is the incarnation of God's kingdom. He is the Word made flesh. He does an honest day's work, is a faithful husband and kind father. He pays his bills, practices justice toward all men. He worships God, reveres the flag, obeys the laws of his country.

The Kingdom of God is like all we may say it is and it is infinitely more than anybody anywhere ever said it was.

MID-WEEK SERMON

THEME: ***Why God Loves You.***

TEXT: Deuteronomy 7:7-8.

"God so loved the world—." Sermons praising God's love. But why his love? Moses here tells Hebrews why God loves them. In substance he says, "God loves you because he loves you!" Delightfully illogical and inconsequential, but what other answer is there?

The Motive of Love: Moses says clearly it was not because of bigness. Here in America we are strongly inclined to worship bigness. When visitors come among us we try to impress them with our size. But listen to Moses: "That is not why God loves you. He loves you, because he loves you!" If you ever tried to find out why any kind of a woman ever married any kind of a man, the answer, I am sure, was "Just because—!" And to the parties chiefly concerned it appears to be a perfectly satisfactory answer. And it seems to satisfy God. There must be many qualities in any man that God just cannot love. But they do not stop him loving the person. "The Lord loves you because he loves you."

Our Lack of Belief in God's Love: This is part of the reason for our lack of complete belief in God's love, our failure to fully trust and rest in the love of God. When we are entirely honest we have to admit we can see no reason why God should love us. That is the trouble with our faith. That is what stops our prayers in our throats. We simply cannot believe that God finds far more meaning in the prayer of a little child than in all the planets that go marching round his throne. It is all so simple and so wonderful and so hard for us to grasp that most of the time we move around in a state of semi-unbelief.

The Illogic of Love: I had a seminary friend. He was a Rhodes Scholar, a man of brilliant attainments. He went to China, and after several years, contracted a disease. He died recently. He could have had almost anything, but he chose to be a missionary. You cannot explain that. You cannot explain the father in the parable of the Prodigal Son. You cannot fully explain Calvary. "God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son." Why? You cannot explain it. But you can accept it. That is all love asks. That is all God asks.

TOPICS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE'S SOCIETIES

CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR: Y. P.—Evangelism. Steadfastness of Jesus. Luke 9:51-56. (Palm Sunday.)
Jr.—Our Place in the Church Universal. I Cor. 15:58. I Thess. 3:11-13.
LUTHER LEAGUE: Sr.—What Does Christ's Death Mean to Me? (Palm Sunday.) Isa. 53:3-6.
Y. P.—Christian Hymns. Songs of the Lord's Passion. Hebr. 13:12-15.
Inter.—Joining Church. Matt. 10:32.
WALTHER LEAGUE: April Topic—War and Peace. Motives. 1. Cause of War. 2. God's Purpose in War.

FOR THE BULLETIN BOARD

In the heart of a bulb is the promise of Spring.
Heavy hearts need not be permanently so.
There is beauty in a gathering storm.
Riches and rank rate low among life's essentials.
The song of hope will always live if you sing it.
The faith of your friend is a lamp aglow. Don't snuff it.
No loss devoid of gain.
Faith's heaviest cross is really light.
It takes a holy citizen to make a Holy City.

CALL TO WORSHIP: "Seek ye the Lord while He may be found. Call ye upon Him while He is near."
PSALM: 98.
PRELUDE: Resurrection Morn—*Johnston.*
ANTHEM: Awake, Thou That Sleepest—*Maker.*
OFFERTORY: Cristo Trionfante—*Yon.*
POSTLUDE: Easter Alleluia.
OFFERTORY SENTENCE: "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of Heaven and pour you out a blessing that there shall not be room enough to receive it."
OFFERTORY PRAYER: Light and understanding has come to us through Thy gracious teaching, and we offer a portion of that which Thou hast placed in our care, so Thy laws may be made manifest to all our brethren. Lead us to a fuller understanding of Thy love, so we may do that which Thou hast commanded us to do.
BENEDICTION: The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

SERMONS

Easter Sunday.

THEME: ***The Garden and The Sepulchre***

FRANCIS J. HAYDEN, D. D.

TEXT: "Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden a new sepulchre, wherein was never man yet laid." John 19:41.
HYMNS: "The Old Rugged Cross."
"Jerusalem The Golden."—*Ewing,* 7s, 6s, *D.*

Every human life has been placed by God in a garden. What a beautiful garden is this in which we live, so full of sunshine and song—and yet in this garden, there is for every one, a sepulchre? To discover the meaning of the tomb has been the greatest endeavor of the human mind in all ages of mankind. The subject has a perpetual fascination for the human mind. One by one the children of men pass out of the garden into the tomb and we see them no more. What wonder then that we peer through its half-open door to see if there be not some light amid its darkness!

I believe that that sepulchre is the doorway to Immortality. I believe it not because of the hints found in the various religions of the world, though all religions hint at it; not because of suggestions found in the Old Testament, though these are there to be found; not because it is sustained by philosophy, though philosophy does sustain it; not because it is rendered probable by science, though science does render it probable—but I believe that that sepulchre is the doorway to Immortality because it comes from Him who was never Himself deceived and who never deceived another—He spoke not what He thought but what He knew. He has changed the problem of the sepulchre into a solution so that it is for the Christian a problem no longer.

What is that resurrection life into which He enters and into which He ushers His own? We know but little about it; it cannot be revealed to us in the flesh and we are unable to perceive it by the senses. You cannot explain to the savage paddling his crude canoe the majesty of an ocean steamer, like the Queen Mary. You cannot explain to the worm in the chrysalis the

delightful flight of the butterfly in the sunshine. So we cannot understand all about that life to which the tomb will lead. But there are some things we know; it will be so transcendent and glorious that the best things of earth will seem paltry and common place.

Our friends will be there too, and we will know them. Without our friends we would not care to live in the most magnificent palace which God could build. Moses and Elijah appeared to our Lord on the Mount of Transfiguration; the disciples knew them and they knew each other—there are friends in Heaven. Our natures there will be enlarged and widened and not contracted and so our need of friends will be greater than ever before. Memory will not be destroyed but strengthened; vision will not be impaired but widened; our affections will not be narrowed but deepened. So we shall know and love our friends better than ever before. Jesus knew his friends and they knew Him after his resurrection.

But best of all, most precious thought of all, our greatest and truest Friend will be there too. Said our Saviour, "Where I am, there ye shall be also."

But that is not all—the city will be filled with a multitude of people. The multitude of the saved will come from the East and from the West, and from the North and from the South. They will gather into the Heavenly city from every tongue and every people; they will come from under the Dipper of the North and from under the Southern Cross. Said the apostle John as he got a glimpse of the Heavenly hosts, "There was ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands." There was nothing small in St. John's estimate of the saved. "The multitude," said he, "is so great that no man can number it." I like that phrase, a multitude which no man can number for it expresses the vastness of salvation. The salvation which has been offered to us through our Lord is not some narrow and paltry thing as some would have it. The Incarnation of God in Jesus Christ is not for naught. "He shall see of the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied—a multitude which no man can number."

That sepulchre in the garden will lead to a life of activity. It is called the Heavenly city and a city is the symbol of activity and industry and life. We will finish up much we have begun here on earth. Here our life is narrowed down to this one planet of our solar system; but there, our life will be broadened out into the universe. Our capacities now hedged in by the sense of limitation of earthly vision will widen out to something like to the Divine image which is planted in us "Now we know in part, but then we shall know as we are known." It says in the Scripture that we shall be equal to the angels. The angels were sent by God to rescue Lot and family from the burning city; they were sent to minister to our Lord in his temptations; they were sent to roll away the stone from his sepulchre. So Moses and Elijah were sent on an errand to meet our Lord on the Mount of Transfiguration. In the New Testament we read that Lazarus, poor and unfortunate on earth, was received in Heaven into Abraham's bosom. Abraham is there represented as having charge of Lazarus; Abraham was an old inhabitant of Heaven and so was prepared to introduce Lazarus to the new life and the new ways of the Heavenly city. To such a life of friendship and activity the tomb will open.

But only to those, observe, who have in them the life of Jesus Christ. No hope for such a life is offered to any except to those who are in Christ Jesus. He it is and he alone who has conquered Death and the Tomb; He is the first fruits of them that sleep. What then is that life which in Him was victorious over the grave and which we too must have if we are to share in his victory? As we glance over the world's history, we see that there are three stages in the development of human character. At first, force was deified and thus the strongest were the greatest—the giant was the hero—Nimrod, the mighty hunter. In the second stage, intellect is deified; the intellectual man is thought to be the greatest—thus Homer and Plato command the most respect. But the third stage is the Christian stage where goodness is thought to be the highest—not power, not genius, but goodness marks the true ideal. Thus at this point, Jesus Christ becomes the hero and ideal. The same three stages are seen in the development of individual life. The boy admires Samson carrying the gates of Gaza on his shoulder, or Caesar at the head of the Tenth Legion. Young manhood looks upon genius as the greatest; Shakespeare moulding the marvellous characters of his drama and Emerson composing moral maxims; but the mature Christian places before all these, character; Washington sacrificing for his country, Livingstone giving up personal interests for the welfare of dark Africa. This last, Christian character, such as the Lord himself had, this it is which death cannot destroy. He in whom Jesus Christ is the Resurrection, and Life, who stands for the graces of character and not the strength of muscle or brain, he it is for whom the tomb will be the gateway to a larger life.

Those who have most this life of the Saviour in them, they who most show forth His goodness, they will be the highest in that other life. One star differeth from another star in glory and that which will make them different will not be because of differences in education, or social position or in the amount of their possessions on earth, but that which will make the difference among the inhabitants of Heaven will be the degrees in which they possess the goodness of Jesus Christ. Moses stands high among the saints of Heaven though once in Egypt he was a slave. Elijah stands high among the Heavenly hosts, though once in poverty he was dependent upon the charity of a widow. But that which is most wonderful of all is this, that the poorest man who ever lived on earth is highest of all up yonder. You know the story of His life—He was born in a manger; His early years He worked for a living at the carpenter's bench; He then began the work of teaching men and He taught without any remuneration; when at the very climax of His power on earth He could say that He had not a place whereon to lay His head; He was betrayed by men and put to death, but that life, so lowly, so poor, so humble, it was a life of service and of goodness and it could not be locked up in a tomb and so the angels came from Heaven and rolled back the stone and on the Resurrection Morn He came forth into the Immortal life. Then for a few weeks, He manifested Himself from time to time to His disciples until one day they were gathered together upon the Mount of Olivet; as there they stood, they looked up into Heaven and they saw a light appear in the zenith—it grew brighter and brighter, it approached them and then a great cloud of glory enveloped the Saviour and He was

taken up, up—the light grew less and less until finally it had disappeared and the dome of blue was over them as before. Then as they listened, they heard the angels who were accompanying the Lord sing, "Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift them up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in." And then the hosts of Heaven who had gathered in great numbers at the gates sing out in the Heavenly antiphone, "Who is this King of glory?" and the angels who were ascending with the Saviour replied "The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle. Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of Glory shall come in." Then the everlasting gates majestically arose and Jesus of Nazareth who could not be held in the tomb, who had risen on the Resurrection Morn, and now had risen from the earth, passed in through the gates of pearl, up past the principalities and powers and ranks and dominions until He reached the highest place of all. Thus as for Him the tomb was the pathway to glory, so will it be for us all who have Him for our Saviour and Redeemer and who partake of his life.

THEME: *Awake and Sing! Thy Dead Shall Live!*

CHARLES HADDON NABERS, D. D.

TEXT: Isaiah 26:19.
HYMNS: "The Strife Is O'er . . ."—*Victory,* 8 8 8, 4.
"Alleluia! Alleluia!"—*Lux Eoi,* 87, 87, *D.*

The melody of immortality rises highest in the mind of man at the Easter season. At other times of the year less triumphant music drowns out this strain of Christian song, becoming so raucous that only an ear touched by personal grief can catch, amid the clamor of brazen instruments in the orchestra, the winsome notes of eternity. But at Easter, all instruments play a single tune. All voices of Christian song are lifted upon the same high, clear note—the psalm of immortality. It is a victory shout for every disciple.

Isaiah, royal prophet of Israel in a day of dense, deepening shadows, set this music to these words, "O Thou Eternal, thy dead shall live again, awaking from the dust with songs of joy; for thy dew falls with light and life till dead spirits arise." (Moffatt.) It is the meaning of the Easter parade, and the justification for bringing forth garments of spring and life as the dull, drab clothes of winter are gladly laid aside.

Earth presents many spectacles too tragic for either participation or observance unless the mind and heart is buttressed against their desiccating power by the hope of immortality. Did you ever attend the funeral of a good man, or a good woman, one who has struggled long and to all appearances, uselessly, against the encroachment of forces that have sapped the strength, corroded every material asset, and he has come to the end of an earthly existence with nothing except a character that has been refined in the steady fires of suffering. It does not make sense if the grave is the final act in the drama of man. At such a funeral there are only two words that can be spoken. One is the verdict of Edgar Allen Poe:

"Out—out are the lights—out all!
And, over each quivering form,
The curtain, a funeral pall,
Comes down with the rush of a storm,
And the angels, all pallid and wan,
Uprising, unveiling, affirm
That the play is the tragedy, 'Man,'
And its hero the Conqueror Worm."

Except, of course one inconsistency must be eliminated: There would be no angels, for the presence of angels is predicated upon an assurance of immortality. The only other word that can be spoken is the message of Isaiah: "Thy dead shall live again, awaking from the dust with songs of joy."

And the wars where the choicest youth of the finest nations are blown to atoms by strange explosives dropped from miles above the earth, where statesmen who could solve the affairs of nations sleep in unmarked graves before their talents are ever developed, where poets with songs unwritten, and physicians with skill untried and undeveloped slough off as cannon fodder, slaughtered to make good the angry threat of a power-crazed ruler who moves millions of men across the world as a chess player moves the pawns upon a square of cardboard,—can you stand even an hour of war, just to read of it with a three thousand mile perspective, without the assurance of something beyond for its helpless victims, without the faith that for the lives that end so quickly and so uselessly, there is another chapter, that the serial does not close and that another issue is coming from the press of God, and the present episode has for its last sentence: "To be Continued"? Over Gettysburg and above Verdun, over the Maginot line and across the Siegfried fortifications, on the snow-covered forests of Finland must ring out the assurance: "Thy dead shall live again, awaking from the dust with songs of joy."

That faith has made significant the march of man over hills of hardship and through seas of sorrow. Rome at Easter is the supreme manifestation on earth of the hold which the message of Immortality has upon the Christian thought of the whole world, for that city is crowded to utmost capacity with pilgrims who have journeyed thither from every continent in order to worship at their cathedral shrine on the day when the worship shall be a pæan of praise for eternal life through the Death-conquering Saviour.

But I have noticed that the average pilgrim spends almost as much time groping his uneven way through the catacombs out on the Appian Way as he does at High Mass. Down beneath the surface of the highway is a veritable labyrinth of passages where for generation after generation men and women lived, driven underground not from fear of air raids, but from persecution by angry followers of Caesar-worship. Why did they stand it? How did they endure? They endured as seeing Him that was invisible! They stood it because they were made joyous and happy by a sublime faith in eternity, and upon the stone walls of their dark abodes they chiselled hymns of superb hope and verses of steadying assurance to the effect: "Thy dead shall live again, awaking from the dust with songs of joy." A walk through the catacombs of St. Sebastian in Rome is never depressing to the modern Christian; within a few minutes the light of his little taper is forgotten as the light of the eternal shore shines upon his joy-lighted soul, as he shares the faith of the Christians who preserved truth through fire and fagot, through sword and pain.

As with Rome, so with Jerusalem. I sat, back in the days of Turkish rule in the land of our Lord, upon the roof of a building just across from the Church of the Holy Sepulchre and watched the multitudes mull in and out of the square for the Easter morning celebration of the Christian hope of immortality. Thousands of the pilgrims to the Holy City had reached it on foot, some from far distant Russia when that country was still largely Christian. Poor people who had endured privations by land and sufferings by sea, whose feet were bare, and whose clothing was in rags, but on Easter morning when the church was ablaze with light, the faces were shining with a divine glory that human countenances never know save through the presence of the Spirit of God within the heart. Hardships and trials and pains were all forgotten in the sheer happiness of faith, for the music of the bells which had known crusading triumphs and defeats, Turkish victories and disasters, rang out the glad notes: "Christ is risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept." It was a personal assurance to the heart of every pilgrim from afar: "The dead shall live again, awaking from the dust with songs of joy."

Medina contains the bones of Mohammed,—Jerusalem shows but an empty tomb. That tomb is an earnest of the emptiness of every tomb, when from sea and land shall be called again the blessed dead who have died in the Lord, and who therefore have not died in vain.

That empty tomb in a Jerusalem garden stamps upon the life of man certain truth that makes living glorious, and even the darkest night brilliant with divine stars in the heaven of the heart.

Here is the first truth: Christianity has laid its hand upon a universal hope to make it personal and certain. This is the meaning of the statement that Christ brought life and immortality to light through His Gospel. George H. Morrison thus tells it: "In the voices heard in a street of slums was one whose clear notes indicated worth and charm. The master musician called the owner of this voice, gave training and development, until the curtain of the Metropolitan arose to reveal her as a star. So, the God of love takes this longing for eternity deep within every man, blesses it through the words of our Lord, develops it through His words and life, seals it with divine approval on the third day after Christ is laid in a tomb, and makes it available to all who through faith come to God in Christ."

Here is the second truth: The Lord of life and conqueror of death defines heaven for the Christian in understandable and desirable terms. Life beyond the grave for the cultured Greek was so vague and gloomy as to make the citizen of Athens view it with both suspicion and fear. Life beyond for the Moslem is so vile as to make the pure minded follower of the Arabian seer revolt from its sensual implications and promises. What for the Christian is life beyond the portals of this earth? It is first of all: "My Father's House." There we find a Father Who cares for His own, and Whose supreme revelation is love. Forever gone there, is the sense of loneliness and frustration that dogs men often to the end of their earthly days. Again, heaven is, "The land of the untroubled heart." Jesus said, as He contemplated it for us, "Let not your heart be troubled." The troubles that afflict

the just in number may be great, but from them all Christ delivers as He bids His children enter the land of the untroubled heart. Yet again, it is "The city without fear." Jesus said, "Be not afraid." Fear shall vanish like the mists before the advent of the summer sun.

Here is the third truth: Christianity through its doctrine of personal immortality vindicates all the hopes and longings of man, authenticates beyond argument and question our best sense of values, our certainty—God implanted, Christ nurtured and Holy Spirit sustained—as to the supremacy of the human personality. A perfect tie in the Genesis that reveals the creation of man in the image of God, and His endowment with divine attributes, with Psalm Eight which shouts: "What is man that thou art mindful of him, and the son of man that thou visitest him?" and answers with the assurance that man is above all else in the world of the Lord, and a fulfillment of the daring vision of Isaiah, possible only through eternal life that "a man shall be a hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land."

"Thy dead shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust, for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead."

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

Christ Shows Himself Alive.

LESSON: Luke 24:1-43. Print Luke 24:13-17, 25-35.
GOLDEN TEXT: I was dead, and behold, I am alive for evermore. Rev. 1:18.
DEVOTIONAL READING: Revelation 1:12-18.
INTER. & SR. TOPIC: How Gloom was Changed to Joy.
Y. P. & ADULTS: What a Living Christ Means to Me.

Verse 33 implies that these persons to whom Christ revealed Himself were not Apostles. One of them was Cleopas of whom we know nothing for the name is not the same as Clopas. These men were going to Emmaus, a little village about eight miles to the northwest of Jerusalem. As they walked, Jesus, unrecognized, joined them. Mark 16:12 says that He appeared to them "in another form." Apparently, he had been walking with them some little time, listening to their conversation, before He said, literally, "What words are these which ye throw back and forth to each other?" Then follows, in the words of Cleopas, a review of the stirring events and an expression of astonishment at His own apparent ignorance of them. Jesus enlightens them from the Scriptures. The term "O fools" which appears in verse 25 means only "walking in thought, understanding and consideration." It does not imply contempt.

Christ points out two fruitful causes of religious error; 1. lack of personal, individual, and independent thought; 2. reluctance to receive truth opposed to time and prejudice. He lays emphasis on the fact that we are to believe *all* that the prophets have spoken. These men believed only a part. Many today emasculate the Bible to suit their own convenience, and intellectual prejudices.

The Scriptures are like a mine over which we walk without knowing the treasures beneath our feet. They are like the towers of nature which have always contained the treasures of the telegraph, telephone, electricity, steam power, coal for warming and yet men did not know these riches for ages. The story is told of a duke who craved from an ancient king his daughter's hand in marriage. The king answered by handing him an iron ball. Indignant, the duke threw it to the ground when, behold, a spring struck, the ball opened and displayed a silver chicken, this a golden egg, this a marriage ring complete and gorgeous, set with precious diamonds. So the Bible contains hidden treasures enclosed one within another.

EVENING SERMON

THEME: ***Jesus Has Risen! It Is True!***

CHARLES HADDON NABERS, D. D.

TEXT: Matthew 28:6.
HYMNS: "Come ye Faithful, Raise the Strain."—*St. Kevin,* 76, 76, *D.*
"The Day of Resurrection!"—*Lancashire,* 76, 76, *D.*

Jerusalem sleeps!

It is Saturday night after the crucifixion of Christ. Jerusalem sleeps not so well on this Sabbath night as the sleepy city usually slumbers, but much better than on the previous night. Tension is relaxed, not entirely, but somewhat. Even a little counts.

In his second-story bed room above David Street rolls restlessly a middle-class merchant of Jerusalem, the average citizen of the city. Just before dawn he turns to where he can watch for the glimmers of light through the grilled window that juts over the stone-paved thorough-fare, and muses on the events of the past days:

"Friday had been a terrible day, not good for business, not good for anything. Days like Friday are more than mortals can endure. The furore raging in Jerusalem for more than a year had rushed with cyclonic speed to its tragic climax, clearly foreseen and undeniably inevitable from the day when the Galilean Teacher, surrounded by an enthusiastic group of fisherman peasants, had dared to stand against the established order of the Jerusalem priest-hood. His mountainside and lake-shore talks had struck at the heart of Hebrew ecclesiastology. That could never be tolerated. It is bad for business, and for everything else. Since the Jews have lost their political power to Rome, religious power is all they have left, and we must keep that at all costs.

"Trouble is that this Galilean Teacher, Jesus, wouldn't stay up yonder in Galilee. Surrounded by devotees who hung breathlessly on His words—attractive too—and watched Him perform strange deeds—how do you suppose the fellow managed it? Clever. Anyhow—He ventures into Jerusalem and takes the spotlight in the temple court. Early in the week He drove out the concession owners in the court, men who paid the priests for the places they built their booths. Anybody knows you couldn't get by with that! Immediately the priests took necessary steps to liquidate him, found one of His own hangers-on to sell Him out, and hurried the trial.

"They didn't allow any delay in the legal process, quite the reverse! First trial came Friday before daylight, got the Sanhedrin out of bed before sunrise—that was good—and then rushed Him to Pilate. They had one accusation for the Jewish leaders, and another one for the Roman. It worked, as they had planned it to work, but for a few hours, what a furore! Jerusalem was in an uproar with the storm and all that. Some silly folks associated it with Jesus. People claimed to see strange sights. People who had been dead a long time were recognized in the dark streets. Strange. But the soldiers handled things nicely. I tell you, they can fuss at Rome all they want, but I am glad the soldiers are here in times like these. Jesus was executed, soon dead, and when He was taken down from the cross—horrible sight, these crosses—and buried, we went home to eat the Passover in peace.

"Last night I didn't sleep much. I don't think anybody in Jerusalem slept. In the air was some peculiar tension. Even your best friends looked different, and you hardly knew about what to talk, even to them, even at home.

"Suppose the claims the Nazarene made were true. His followers said that He was God, that He could not die. Suppose that were true! What a difference it would make to everything if in our city and on that street below walked God Himself. What glory! Who would bother about Roman taxes, Greek customs and Hebrew fights if God was near enough for us to see Him and hear His voice? It's foolishness to think there is a God like that, it's too grandly good to be true.

"Jesus. Well I saw Him several times. He was near me. I heard Him speak. About Him was something different. His words rang true, with the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, and truth bigger than I thought truth could ever be. That morning when His eyes gazed straight into mine, I felt, well, the wide, full sweep of the snow-covered Lebanon Mountains, and the music of the wind singing through the cedar forests, the gigantic wash of the Great Sea with waves wholly friendly, the calmness that lifts one above mountains and wind and seas, myself capable of anything and everything. I felt that He understood me perfectly, that He was even more generous and forgiving than my mother to her little boy when he was naughty. I looked at Him; and He made the world understandable, duty simple and God real. If only He were here, what a difference it would make.

"I don't blame fellows like garrulous Peter and quiet Andrew from following Him from one end of the country to the other. I'd follow too to the end of the world, if I thought there was anything to it. But He's dead, and all the high hopes of His crazy followers are come to naught. And here we are. It's the same old dreary day. The constant grind of the common hours, haggling with the farmers who bring their grain from the fields on their camels and then haggling with the city men to sell this grain."

Silence everywhere.

But a shout in the street below: "Yusef Effendi! He's risen! He's risen!"

The merchant rushes to the window: "Naharak Said, (good morning). What do you say?"

"He's risen. Jesus! Don't you understand? His tomb is empty. He did what He said He would do. He was true!"

The merchant grips the bars and tries to speak: "Surely you are mad. You do not make sense. His disciples came by night and have stolen His body to deceive the people. It could not have happened otherwise, for I know He was dead!"

"No! No! No! Man, guards around the tomb saw a vision of angels, mist pushed back as the dead man walked away alive, throbbing with such life as they never saw before. They are all gathered at the Palace, and the Priest is there, and they are talking about it now. And more than that, His disciples have come out of hiding, they are excited with a glow of something new upon their countenances, and I passed Mary Magdalene on my way here. She has seen Him already!"

Early in the morning had been the sad cry, "They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him." Later it was changed into the discovery of the Lord walking the avenues and lanes of the city and country, and living in the hearts and minds of men who knew Him by faith. My Lord isn't being laid; He is laying to rest the evil of the earth, and the sordidness of sin, the shamelessness of selfishness, the iniquity of littleness.

As this average citizen of an ancient day mused, so can the modern man muse today:

"It is true then. The graveyard is not the end of the journey for the creature called man. He is in the thought of God, who calls him to a place prepared for him, in a Father's House filled with eternal mansions. The highest longings of my heart have more than come true. The deepest dreams of our saintliest prophets have been vastly exceeded. The things I come to feel and to which I aspire when the eyes of Christ are upon me can be realized, for lo, He is with me always. Death could not hold Him captive, nor can death hold prisoner the purposes and plans of the Everlasting God for earth and for men.

"I wander over to the northern side of Jerusalem, and see an empty tomb. In the crevice cut into the stone is a place where the broken body of Jesus was placed. But it is gone. 'He is risen, as He said!' Therefore all His words are true; therefore all His hopes for me are true and through Him possible."

The Risen Christ is on the march across the nations and over the centuries. Darkness has its hour, but the Sun of Righteousness arises with healing in His wings, to tread down all wickedness until it become ashes under the soles of His feet. From the empty tomb in Judea comes the potent words of Isaiah: "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead."

"Blow, golden trumpets, sweet and clear,
Blow soft upon the perfumed air;
Bid the sad earth to join our song,
'To Christ doth victory belong!'

"Oh, let the winds your message bear
To every heart of grief and care;
Sound through the world the joyful lay,
'Our Christ hath conquered death today!'

"On cloudy wings let glad words fly
Through the soft blue of echoing sky;
Ring out, Oh trumpets, sweet and clear,
'Through Death, Immortal Life is here!'"

MID-WEEK SERMON

THEME: ***Light in Our Darkness.***

TEXT: Matthew 28:1.

A pathetic figure at the tomb of Christ. Represents the grief and longing of humanity over the dead. But more. Mary finds the tomb empty, a strong light shining in it. Then a Figure speaking her name, and the light was in the heart of Mary. Christ was risen! After twenty centuries the light streams unbroken and undimmed from the Empty Tomb below Calvary. Modern man still seeks to walk in that light.

The Crowning of Human Personality: We have become doubtful of our own worth as individuals, of the value of our personalities. We have had dinned into our ears a philosophy of pessimism and despair. And many have yielded to this. The strain breaks them down. And the psychologists are sending them back to religion. Jesus always taught the essential worth of human personality. And when he came from the tomb he set the crown of immortality on that personality.

The Abiding Values Are Spiritual: That Jesus is right we are convinced. We may not have admitted it, or reasoned it out clearly. But we know the things of the spirit are the only enduring, abiding values. The argument for immortality, for the worth of the individual, for the abiding values of human personality, is not in what men have done, but in what they have been. E. M. Martin, in *The Life Of* Joseph H. Choate, tells of certain quite words Mr. Choate spoke of his faith in a life beyond. He then says, "All this suggests that, having lived long as life goes, and done what he could, and got what he might, he felt that what he had got and done and been was not enough, and that further adventures lay before him. One writes 'the end' of his biography,—but that only means the end of a book."

Light in Our Darkness: Jesus was right. In his light we see light. We know God did not make man capable of growth, of desire, of nobility, of love, of passionate devotion, of loyalty to honor, of faith in God, only to be frustrated and forever unsatisfied. John 14:1, 2. "I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with his likeness."

TOPICS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE'S SOCIETIES

CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR: Y. P.—Evangelism. He Liveth Forevermore. Mark 16:1-11. (Easter.)
Jr.—Resurrection Day, Birth of the Church. I Cor. 15:12-17. Acts 2:22-24. (Easter.)
LUTHER LEAGUE: Sr.—Great Easter Hymns. I Cor. 15:20-21; 55-57.
Y. P.—Songs of the Resurrection.
Inter.—Christ Alive. Luke 24:1-10.
WALTHER LEAGUE: April Topic—War and Peace. What War Brings. How Can we Prevent War?

APRIL, THIRD SUNDAY

CALL TO WORSHIP: "The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon Him, to all that call upon Him in truth."
PSALM: 150.
PRELUDE: Laudate Dominum Omnes Gautes—*Lemmens.*
ANTHEM: Sing Ye to the Lord—*Lloyd.*
OFFERTORY: Easter Pastorale—*Manney.*
POSTLUDE: The Strife Is O'er—*Luard-Selby.*
OFFERTORY SENTENCE: "Cast thy bread upon the waters, for thou shalt find it after many days. Give a portion to seven, yea, even unto eight; for thou knowest not what evil shall be upon the earth."
OFFERTORY PRAYER: Thy great gift of love is an ever present reminder to Thy faithful that our love is being drawn in return. We come to Thee this blessed day with full hearts, and bounteous gifts, as an expression of gratitude for Thy goodness to us. Swell our hearts in praise, cause us to sing Thy praises evermore.
BENEDICTION: Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

SERMONS

THEME: *What Difference Does Easter Make?*

C. IRVING BENSON, D. D., MELBOURNE.

TEXT: "What went ye out for to see?" Matt. 11:7.
HYMNS: "May we Thy Precepts, Lord, . . ."—*Meribah,* 886, *D.*
"Jesus, Thou joy of loving hearts."—*Germany, L. M.*

What does the resurrection mean for us? What difference does Easter make to life twenty centuries after? It gives us what Peter alluringly calls "a living hope." The pathetic thing about life is that it is strewn with withered and broken hopes. Once, they danced and gleamed like mirages across the desert sands, but only to disappoint and disillusion.

Sir Titus Salt, strolling in his garden one day, saw a caterpillar climbing up a stick stuck in the ground to support a rose tree. He watched intently as it toiled slowly upwards, inch by inch. Then at length it reached the top, and lifted up its head in the air, feeling round, expecting something more. It had made the ascent hoping to be rewarded with satisfying green leaves, but was disgusted to find nothing at the end. Is not that caterpillar, arrived at the top of the stick, an illustration of many of the hopes that we cherish? They prove empty, unsatisfying, lifeless.

The Living Hope.

Peter saw that first Easter giving to life "a living hope." A living hope, mark you—not frail, flickering or fading—but strong and enduring, having in it the elements of endless satisfaction. It is easy to slap a man on the back and tell him to cheer up, and look on the bright side. That artificial brightness splutters out like a fire-work spinning wheel. But the hope of which Peter wrote is maintained by the inspiration of a vitalizing power—the resurrection of Christ from the Dead. The difference between the hope born of the resurrection and all earthly hope is the difference between a dry-cell battery and a dynamo—one peters out, the other generates unlimited energy. This hope is not an affair of temperament, but a response to a revelation. It brings to life a permanent passion.

Man has always stood weeping and wondering beside the iron gate of death, asking the ancient question "If a man die, shall he live again?" Deep down in their hearts were perpetual intimations of immortality. They faintly trusted, but they were not sure. But on that Easter morning, Life broke through the hush of death. Death was robbed of its sting, the grave was stripped of its victory. The resurrection is the proof that in thinking of life on the other side of the hill, we are not painting pictures of mist and moonshine.

Centuries ago a philosopher speculated that there must be a great southern continent to balance the continents in the Northern Hemisphere. Then adventurers set sail and discovered it. They returned and reported that they had seen the Great South Land—had actually stood and walked on it. Christ was the traveller who returned from the silence of death, and said to His friends, "See, it is I Myself."

Death the Servant.

Life does not go out into nothingness nor does it sink back into the eternal essence like a dew-drop into the ocean. The individual personality survives. That is the hope which Easter proclaims. Death is not a gate out of life, but into life. Death is no more mysterious than birth; it is as natural to die as to breathe. Death is only a mere incident, the passing from the visible, earthly scene, into the larger sphere which stretches away. Death is not master, but only a servant.

Easter with its living hope is too big to shut up into a single day of the calendar, we need it all the year round. For, consider how hope brightens and stimulates, freshens interest. The capacity to look forward, to feel that it is better further on, that darkness is rolling into light, that pain is moving to a hidden joy—that is a necessity of all effort and progress. Once we lose the onward expectant view, the bottom is knocked out of life, the zest for living is exhausted. It is hope that induces the farmer to sow, the artist to paint, the author to write, the mother to sacrifice for her child's future.

The Practice of Hope.

The most pitiable people on this planet are those who are just doing things mechanically because they have to do them, but with no outlook of getting anywhere. "Where there is no vision the people are perishing."

The living Easter hope is not a faraway dream dangled on a distant horizon, but a glow that comes into the soul, an active principle to be practically used and gloried in now. Peter found in Christ's resurrection the daily motive and law of his life.

It makes a definite difference whether we have this living hope or not. Why should we sacrifice present comfort for the sake of an inward principle? Why should we keep up the endless struggle against temptation? Why should we prize character above material gain? If life were just the flutter of joys and pains, the glimmer of smiles and tears, just the mere handful of years that meet the eye, then we might as well give up trying and glide with the tide. But life is vaster far than this little school-house of a world shows. Here we only learn how—yonder we live.

When All Seems Lost.

Only a living hope can keep us sane amid the buffetings of trouble and capsizings of sorrow. Today, perhaps, your circumstances are reasonably agreeable. You are sailing with a fair wind over a smooth sea. Tomorrow an accident may befall you, involving the loss of limb or sight—may thrust you on to a bed of pain from which you will never walk again in strength. Have you a hope in your mind which could rise superior to such a stroke, which would help you to bear it and to keep your face to the morning, believing the best is yet to be? Or would every light be extinguished in a dungeon of gloom? What if your business, prospects, livelihood, were suddenly ruined by some new invention, or the dishonesty of a rogue in whom you had implicit confidence. Is there a hope in your life that would stand the strain, keeping you from souring cynicism? Deeper still, what if those who mean everything to you in this world were taken away? We may reconcile ourselves to the passing of the aged, heavy with years as a full shock of corn, but what when those in whom our hopes are invested are cut down in their prime, their usefulness arrested, great talents taken away? The wrench, the hurt, no one can gainsay. Have you a living hope that can triumph through calamity?

Salvation From Nightmare.

Can you believe that in the other world, just through the door, God ofttimes needs the service not only of the old but of the young when their ability is in full flower? And heaven itself would be a poor home if there were no children in it.

"Alas for him who never sees
The stars shine through the cypress trees;
Who hopeless lays his dead away,
Nor looks to see the breaking day
Across the mournful marbles play.
Who hath not learnt in hours of faith,
The truth to flesh and sense unknown,
That Life is ever Lord of Death,
And Love can never lose its own."

Thus we see that the Easter faith is not only a matter of personal consolation. Without it our loved ones are finally dead, and we shall be finally dead and so men and women would go on dying to the end of time until the world burns out and there will be nothing conserved in God's universe for all the effort and sacrifice of the human race. But the Man who came back, saves us from a nightmare such as that. "It is I, Myself. . . In My Father's house are many mansions."

Sunday After Easter.

THEME: *The Cross of Christ.*

HAROLD E. CARLSON, D. D.

TEXT: "Far be it from me to glory save in the cross of our Lord . . ." Gal. 6:14.
HYMNS: "In the Cross of Christ I Glory."—*Rathbun,* 87, 87.
"Sweet the Moments, Rich in Blessing."—*Batty,* 87, 87.

This vibrant note has echoed down the Christian ages. Paul learned that

the power for Christlike character is by the way of the Cross. Many souls since have traveled over the same Highway and caught the music of the Cross, "sweetest ever sung by mortal tongue."

Listen to the spiritual strains of a hymn which gathers up its major notes ringing from afar. In Sir John Bowring's beautiful hymn, "In The Cross Of Christ I Glory," I think we may find a blending of the myriad melodies about the Cross.

I.

The author of this hymn was a learned man. Many literary and diplomatic honors were justly bestowed upon him. He spoke many languages fluently, and is said to have communicated in a hundred. He was counsel at Hong Kong, China, when the terrible Opium War broke out, and was afterward governor of that British colony. He rendered valuable service to literature by collecting and translating both the more ancient and the more modern popular poems of almost all the countries of Europe of his time. But he will always be known, not by his diplomatic and literary honors, and not by the languages he had at his command, but by the musical language of his soul expressed in this immortal hymn.

One dark, foggy night, Bowring was entering London harbor upon a return from China. His eyes fell upon the crumbling tower of an old cathedral off in the distance. Its great bronze cross was clearly seen by the lights of the harbor that made it stand out in relief against the dense fog. But Bowring's sensitive soul saw more and he wrote the immortal lines, "In The Cross Of Christ I Glory."

As he gazed upon the golden splendor rising above the ruins of a once magnificent cathedral, his soul's eye beheld the grander scene of the Cross of Christ triumphant over change and decay, and he burst forth in song:

> "In the Cross of Christ I glory,
> Towering o'er the wrecks of time;
> All the light of sacred story
> Gathers round its head sublime."

To set down such lines there must have flashed through his mind the thought that the Cross of Christ is the fountain source of Christianity. There must have come to him a gleam from the spiritual heavens that "God is love"—"He was wounded for our transgressions; He was bruised for our iniquities."

Yet one may look upon the Cross and see nothing. The Jews looked up at the Cross and saw only a dying man. The guarding Roman soldiers thought only, "How long must we watch this dying Jew?" We, too, may gaze upon the Cross and see little or nothing. But Bowring was possessed of a faith which saw through the haze of self and sin the clear truth that "all the light of sacred story gathers round its head sublime." The entire Bible is a drama in which the paradox of triumphant tragedy is reached in the climax of the Cross of Christ.

II.

The heavy fog surrounding the golden cross before Bowring as his ship came into London harbor called forth the next clear note of his faith-revealing

lyric. His mind was clouded with the thoughts of life's troubles and disappointments, but gleaming through the shadows he saw the radiant glory of the love of God. Brooding on life's fears and perplexities his soul was stayed on that Love which is deeper than the depth of man's sorrow and despair. So he sang his second stanza:

"When the woes of life o'ertake me,
Hopes deceive and fears annoy;
Never shall the Cross forsake me,
Lo! It glows with peace and joy."

This note reminds us of John Bunyan's dream in "Pilgrim's Progress." "I saw in my dream, that just as Christian came up with the Cross, his burden fell from off his shoulders, and fell from off his back, and began to tumble, and so continued to do until it came to the mouth of the sepulchre where it fell in, and I saw it no more. Then was Christian glad and said: 'He hath given me rest by His sorrow, and life by His death'."

Just after the terrible siege of Pekin during the Boxer Massacres, the missionaries gathered in the Temple of Heaven, that mysterious shrine which no one but the emperor had been allowed to visit, and he only once a year. Around the royal marble altar in that heathen temple gathered the missionaries of the Cross and sang the hymn, "In The Cross Of Christ I Glory," which expressed the spirit that had sustained them during those dreadful weeks of suffering and danger. This second stanza should suggest to us this inspiring scene each time we sing its meaningful words. Of a truth does our own poet, John Greenleaf Whittier, sing:

"Never yet abyss was found,
Deeper than the Cross could sound."

III.

Then, perhaps, as Bowring's spirits were made glad by his dwelling upon the thought, "Never shall the Cross forsake me, Lo! It glows with peace and joy," his thoughts turned to the joy of meeting again friends and loved ones upon his return from distant China. But the denseness of the fog cast a shadow over his bright anticipations. Then, wrapped in mystic music, he saw the watery darkness rise, yielding to sunbeams on the morrow. And his soul was radiant with another glory as he beheld the love of God outshining all his hopes and aspirations. It is not so strange then that he should set down his third stanza:

"When the sun of bliss is beaming,
Light and love upon my way;
From the Cross the radiance streaming
Adds more luster to the day."

And the more he pondered, the greater the power and meaning of the Cross of Christ shone into his soul that dark, foggy night.

IV.

But before he wrote the next stanza of his lyric there must have been deep and silent communion with God. The wonderful spiritual harmonies he had just written came back to him in the deep, melodious echo: "God so loved the world that He gave His Son!" Captivated by its transcendent meaning, his soul must have been prompted to cry out, "Ah! There is the central melody of life!" He must have remembered the discordant note there had once been in his life. But he remembered also the change wrought in him when his love for Christ had become the fervent prayer:

> "O may my love for Thee, dear Lord,
> Pure, warm, and changeless be
> A living fire."

He recalled the days of pain and struggle when he grumbled that the roses have their thorns. But he recalled also those blessed moments when he was thankful that thorns have roses. He had learned with Paul that "all things work together for good to them that love God." He looked back upon the days when blessing and pleasures were so many meaningless gifts come into his life. But he remembered also that there had come to him the day when he had seen with eye of faith that all the lowly kindnesses of men were so much love of God to him from heaven sent down. And like gentle breezes these blessed memories fanned the love glow in his soul into deepening communion with God. Such remembrance vitalized his soul anew in love to Christ and imparted to him peace that passeth understanding. From his soul poured forth, therefore, his third stanza:

> "Bane and blessing, pain and pleasure,
> By the Cross are sanctified;
> Peace is there that knows no measure,
> Joys that through all time abide."

V.

The words of this hymn disclose the deep trust in God which marked the life of Sir John Bowring. When blind Dr. Mattheson, who wrote the immortal hymn, "O Love That Wilt Not Let Me Go," was buried, by the side of the grave stood a huge floral emblem, a square of white flowers in the center of which the last lines of this sacred lyric were spelled out in red rose buds, "And from the ground there blossoms red, life that shall endless be." And on the tombstone that marks the resting place of Sir John Bowring, fittingly cut in bold letters is epitomized the glory of his life in the words: "In The Cross of Christ I Glory." These words are the key to his luminous Christian experience and his buoyant hope in the spread of the Gospel over the whole world.

But they have little of beauty for us until we incarnate them. Martin Luther declared that all religion lies in the pronouns. Truth is power only when incarnated. That God is love was revealed by Him who "took the form of a servant and humbled Himself, becoming obedient unto death, yea, the death of the Cross." Is it true, "In the Cross of Christ I glory"? Then am

I power—incarnate truth—and then is told a hungering world "the earthly story, love of all loves!"

PRAYER

We thank Thee for the great reservoirs from which we may draw our strength of life; food that shall nourish and strengthen the body; food that shall build and enlarge the mind; food from the eternal word that shall feed our eternal spirit that it develop into the image and likeness of the Christ Himself. But we discover that our world has lost the old water paths, it has forgotten the way to the old well where the cool water is, about which Thy great servant spoke to his own people, "with joy shall ye draw water from the wells of salvation." We have lost the old water paths and our thirst is so intense that we die of thirst because we have not the water of life, and our civilization surges to its doom. Men lift up swords against each other and guns bellow their hollow voices of death until the dark angel withdraws in horror.

We come this morning to ask that once more our feet may find the old water paths, once more our thirst may be slaked by the cool water that flows from the throne of God, once more our world may be keyed to the likeness presented by the Christ and for which He gave His life that men and women everywhere may be saved from their sins, saved from their selfishness, saved from their doom which always hovers about those who refuse the commands and invitations of God and follow their own paths to their own death. Bless us while we wait and worship at this hour so that the meeting together of those who would learn the will of God shall be new strength to our people as they go back to the morrow and the work of the week to accomplish for God and the common good. Our prayer we ask in the name and for the sake of Jesus Christ, Our Lord, Amen. *Stanley E. Durkee.*

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

Using Witnessing Power.

LESSON: Acts 2:1—4:31. Print Acts 2:1-4; 4:8-20.

GOLDEN TEXT: They were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spake the word of God with boldness. Acts 4:31.

DEVOTIONAL READING: Matthew 10:16-22.

INTER. & SR. TOPIC: Living Courageously.

Y. P. & ADULTS: Power through the Holy Spirit.

Pentecost was fifty days after the Passover and fell on Sunday, May 28, A.D. 30. The Apostles had received power in the Upper Room in Jerusalem. On Pentecost the Church was endowed with power which then was and ever since has been its true life and its highest success. Since that day the term Pentecost has been applied to any marked outpouring of the convicting and converting spirit of God. The sound from heaven as of a rushing of a mighty wind was an extraordinary sound and it came suddenly. It was the Lord breathing upon His people. So the coming of God's spirit upon a soul

is no half way blessing. The tongues of fire, parting asunder, is clarified by the marginal reading as "parting among them" or "distributing themselves." The meaning of the Pentecostal fire is two-fold. The Christian is purified and he is fervent, zealous, enthusiastic and joyful.

The power to convert, to transform human lives, to bring to a faith in Christ, to regenerate the heart, lies not in any human source. It is always and invariably of the powerful moving of the Holy Spirit upon the heart. Lives are changed and men are converted only through the powerful work of the Holy Spirit.

These men were *powerless* until the Holy Spirit came upon them. The advent of the Holy Spirit brings us to the main business of the Book of Acts itself, which is to declare and set up the spiritual reign of God among men. Fire was an early and natural symbol of the energy and glory of the Divine. Read Exodus 3:2, Matthew 3:11, Luke 3:16. The dispensation which was begun with the Baptism of the Spirit has not yet ended. The history of the Christian Church began at Pentecost.

It is still the duty and privilege of believers to receive the Holy Spirit by a conscious and definite act of appropriating faith, just as we receive Jesus Christ. While it is true that all Christians have the Holy Spirit, "if any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his" (Romans 8:9), at the same time we must recognize that to have the Spirit is one thing and to be filled with the Spirit is quite another.

The second section of the lesson deals with the beginning of an opposition which continued to increase in fury and destruction.

It is no new thing for the Gospel to be opposed. Nor is it a strange thing for the great, the official, the powerful, and the influential to be foremost in such opposition. The opposition of ungodly men is

1. Natural, seeing that the heart of man is depraved.
2. Endurable, since our Lord and His Apostles suffered it.
3. Harmless, if we commit the case to God.
4. Overruled for good by Divine Grace and Wise Providence.

Peter takes the post of spokesman for the group and defies the authorities who would impede the witness of the Church. Peter did not flinch before the learning, the dignity, the power, and the hatred of the men whom he here faced. He is filled with the Holy Spirit and the Holy Spirit gave him boldness to proclaim the facts. He quotes from Psalm 118:22. Jesus had used this same verse. (See Matthew 21:42 and Luke 20:17.) Many years later Peter used it again. (See I Peter 2:7-8.)

The question between them was merely one of healing a lame man. We never find the Apostles confining themselves to a mere incident. They discuss the salvation wrought out by Christ. Peter is transformed from a coward and a superficial boaster to an apostle of unquestionable enthusiasm and death-daring boldness.

The presence of the Apostles here and the speech of Peter had three effects upon the Sanhedrin: 1. they were impressed by the bravery of these men, 2. they knew they were unlearned and ignorant as far as the special and

prescribed training of the Scribes was concerned, 3. they knew that they had been with Jesus.

The prohibition laid by the council upon the Apostles was not to refrain from any more miracles nor even to refrain from teaching or preaching. But it was that they could not do these things in the Name of Jesus. These wicked men were conscious of the fact that it was by this *Name* that these men had power.

EVENING SERMON

THEME: ***Now is Christ Risen.***

CHARLES F. BANNING, D. D.

TEXT: Mark 16:1-8.
HYMNS: "The Day of Resurrection!"—*Lancashire*, 7, 6, 7, 6, *D*.
"Christ the Lord is Risen Again."—*Würtemberg*, 77, 77.

The fact of Easter is established. There is too much evidence in its favor for honest doubt. We believe many things that seem incredible. The sun seems to rise in the east and move around the earth but we know this is not true. It seems incredible that a ship weighing from two to six tons could rise 6000 feet in the air and travel at 200 miles per hour. It just isn't possible but you know it is true. This morning a man stood in an outdoor amphitheatre in California and spoke and people all over America heard his voice; heard him in fact before the people in the back row of the amphitheatre heard him. It is incredible, ridiculous to think such a thing, yet we know it is true. Last night we looked up at the stars. Those stars may have burned out and disappeared long ago but we still see their light. If one of those stars burned out and disappeared last night, our great, great, great grandchildren will still see it. Last summer we saw trees that were alive and standing on the first Easter morning more than 1900 years ago. All of these things seems impossible and ridiculous but they are true. So Paul asks Agrippa, "Why should it seem incredible that God could raise the dead?"

Easter presents to each of us a very practical question. What difference does it make in our daily lives? Will it change our motives, our sense of duty, our loyalties, our scale of values to know that we shall not just live for three score years and ten but for eternity? Are we worth anything to others and to God the way we are living? Are we worth the effort Christ put forth for us? What would you think of a man who had been invited to go on a trip around the world but when the time came he appeared at the station with no money, no baggage, no extra clothing, no ticket, no preparation whatever for such a trip? That is the question I am presenting to you this morning. Now is Christ risen. Because he lives, we too shall live.

Easter has a message of comfort also. During the past year many of us have met trying problems and many others have lost loved ones. During the year before us many others will meet sorrow. Without hope sorrow is infinitely harder. Last month we took our older boy down to the station and put him on a train for Texas. It will be a long time before we will see him again. As the train pulled out we said, "There he goes." Then we went upstairs

and sent a telegram that he was on the way and when they received that telegram in Texas they said, "Here he comes." To those who held the faith that because he lives, we too shall live, death is like that.

Listen to the words of an artist who was facing death. "I watch the sunset as I look out over the sea and there is no mystery beyond the horizon line because I know what is over there. I have been there. Well, there is another land that I look towards as I watch the sunset. I have never seen it—but it has a more abiding reality than any of the lands which I do know. This land of immortality is the one thing I know with an absolute and unshaken confidence. In a fairer land with better material and a better working light I shall do better work." That is the assurance that faith gives.

A man was talking to one of the Cape Cod fishermen on the shores of New England. The fisherman was telling him how clear the air was and how far they could see. Rather cynically the man said, "I suppose on a clear day you can see England." The fisherman answered, "Oh, much farther. On a clear night, we can see the moon." Some cynic might say to the Christian, "I suppose you know what will happen next year" and the Christian can answer with faith, "I can tell you what will happen a thousand years from now. Christ will be more triumphant than He is today, war will have ceased, righteousness will have won many of its battles and many of those who love and serve Him, will be with Him."

Please do not misunderstand me. In bringing this Easter challenge I am not talking about duty. I am not saying that it is your duty to go to church or to do good or to live a moral life or to serve others. What if I should tell a parent that it is his duty to provide food for his children? He would tell me he never thought of it in terms of duty because he loved his children. Suppose I told a bride whose wedding was a week from today that it was her duty to prepare for that wedding? Suppose I told a young man that it was his duty to ask his girl for a date once in a while? Suppose I told you it was your duty to go home and eat a good dinner this noon. No, I am not talking about duty, I am talking about love, opportunity, privilege, joy and peace.

Archibald Rutledge tells a story which illustrates this perfectly. He says one of his Negro laborers had a little mangy, mongrel cur. He used to poke fun at its appearance and its mongrel lineage. The negro finally protested, "Cap'n," he said, "you don't know my dog. I got to be careful what I tells him to do case he gwine do it. He always does what I tells him." Not long after that Rutledge was walking down a woodland road and saw the negro's coat and dinner pail lying beside a tree. Nearby was the mongrel dog on watch. The negro was off in the woods working turpentine. Some hours later a fire broke out. That dog knew what the fire was and had plenty of time to get away but to his humble trust he was faithful. He had been told to watch that coat and dinner pail. He loved his master. They found the charred body of the faithful dog lying beside the tree where he had been left. The negro said to Rutledge, "Now you understand don't you Cap'n? That little dog he done worship me." I am not talking to you this morning about duty, I am talking to you about love for one who died for you and rose again.

Jesus invited men to follow Him. He held out no false inducements. He made no idle pledges to them. He said three things would happen to those who followed Him. He said they would get into trouble and they certainly did. He promised that their future would be secure and it was. He told them they would be ridiculously happy. Paul and Silas singing in prison at midnight is a good example. He still calls men to follow him and still offers them those same inducements.

A man went out in the woods in the dead of winter and chopped a bit of frozen earth from the ground and brought it home. It was cold, hard and lifeless. He put it in a flower pot in the warm sunshine in the house. Soon the earth thawed, then the green shoots appeared. Later came bud and blossom and then it brought forth a variety of beautiful flowers out of that which was only frozen clay. In every life there are wonderful possibilities. Easter would bring them out if we would only give it an opportunity. Easter took a group of 120 discouraged, disappointed disciples of Jesus and set them on fire for the Kingdom. They soon conquered the Roman empire. This group of people in this room now far outnumber that early group. We are better educated, we have more influence. If we would but catch that vision we could change this city in a week's time and change the whole moral tone of this area. If the people who are in this room now let Easter have its way in their hearts they could make the rulers of this city as uncomfortable as the 120 followers of Jesus made the rulers of Jerusalem.

John Masefield has a play in which he has one of the characters go to Pilate's wife to tell her that Jesus is dead. "He was a fine young fellow, lady, not past middle age. He was all alone and He defied all the Jews and all the Romans but when they were done with Him, He was a poor broken thing, dead on the cross." "Do you think He is dead?" asked Pilate's wife. "No, lady, I don't," answered the soldier. "Then where is He?" she asked. "Let loose in the world, lady, where neither Roman nor Jew can stop His truth." That is the message of Easter. Christ let loose in the world.

MID-WEEK SERMON

THEME: ***How Often Do We Die?***

TEXT: Matthew 10:39.

"Cowards die many times." "People say we die but once. Really we die every few years just as entirely as we ever shall."—E. E. Slosson.

The Dying of Our Bodies: Particles of lime, carbon and phosphorus being taken out and replaced by new ones, just as a railroad bridge is rebuilt, piece by piece, without tearing down at any one time. Blood changes its composition constantly. New finger nails every four or five months. New skin oftener than new clothes, renewed every month. Only part of body not changed completely in course of a few years is the enamel of our teeth. Are we then the same persons we were seven years ago? Every particle of that man has been dissipated. Absurd! Why? Because if we are changed persons,

it is not because of our bodies. "The water changes but the river remains the same."—Heraclitus. "Fear not him who can kill the body only."

The Killing of Our Spirits: Nerves: Hysteria—an over-intensity of emotional response. Violent outbursts: hysterical. Neurasthenia: nerve weakness. Shrinkings, hesitations, inferiorities, etc.: neurasthenic. Anger: Prov. 27:4. Eccles. 11:10. Ephesians 4:31. "Every ungovernable fit of temper takes ten years off life." Fear: never forget, and to that extent, never the same in initiative and energy. Men already dead: killed by fear. "Be not afraid." Fear an enervating thing, a faithless thing. For God is ever with us.

The Destruction of Our Souls: "Fear him who can destroy the soul and cast it into hell." His name: Sin. Scots preacher's sermon on "I have played the fool": 1. He pays too dear for what he gets; 2. He is too credulous, and of easy confidence; 3. He forgets what really matters. Cannot keep life and live. We build and strengthen our souls by losing life. Our souls are saved by dying: "dead unto sin." Jesus came to give life. He died, and he lives eternally with God in every human heart that trusts him.

TOPICS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE'S SOCIETIES

CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR: Y. P.—Following Jesus. The Test of Discipleship. John 15:8-17.
Jr.—Loyalty to Christ. Chinese Christians are Loyal. II Cor. 6:1-10.
LUTHER LEAGUE: Sr.—Christian Character. Happiness. Matt. 5:3-12.
Y. P.—Songs of the Lord's Ascension. Eph. 1:15-23.
Inter.—Spring and New Life. Mark 4:26-28.
WALTHER LEAGUE: April Topic—War and Peace. The Christian in War. In Peace.

FOR THE BULLETIN BOARD

Only the parasite consumes without producing.
The creatures best resting place is in the heart of his Creator.
A sleeping saint is apt to wake in the same room with an alert sinner.
Your earth is only blessed by Faith, Hope and Love.
Don't say you have no faith. If you haven't one you have another.
Your religion should judge you rather than others.
Your church should be wide enough to include anyone who needed it.
Man can make money but money can unmake the man.
To be straight one must think straight.

APRIL, FOURTH SUNDAY

CALL TO WORSHIP: "My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour."
PSALM: 146.
PRELUDE: Prayer—*de Eranzquin.*
ANTHEM: Beautiful Saviour—*Christiansen.*
OFFERTORY: Pastorale—*Barrell.*
POSTLUDE: March in G—*Clark.*
OFFERTORY SENTENCE: "And God is able to make all grace abound unto you; that ye, having always all sufficiency in everything, may abound unto every good work; as it is written. He hath scattered abroad, He hath given to the poor; His righteousness abideth forever."
OFFERTORY PRAYER: Almighty God, Who hast taught us the true meaning of stewardship, give us the grace to live Thy teachings. We accept Thy challenge and acknowledge our debt to Thee and Thy work for the good of the whole human family and the glorification of Thy Name. Accept these tokens of our indebtedness to Thee. Bless them to Thy service, and make us ready to accept a larger trust in the future.
BENEDICTION: The Lord be with thy spirit. Grace be with you.

SERMONS

THEME: ***A Song of Security.***

CHARLES HADDON NABERS, D. D.

TEXT: Psalm 23:1-6.
HYMNS: "The Lord my Shepherd Is."—*Dedication, S. M.*
"Jesus, Still Lead On."—*Seelenbräutigam,* 55, 88, 55.

Greater than his much-publicized quest for happiness is man's quest for security.

It is an ancient quest. So ancient is it that recorded history does not extend far enough to relate the tale of the first treaty which a group of men made with another group of men in a mutual effort to obtain security. It is a modern quest. So modern is it that it is written upon the pictures of the Britain walking the roads of his island with gas-mask in hand, revolver at his side, and an eye quickly turned skyward for the whirl of an enemy plane.

The ancient Hebrew sought security by binding himself to a strong empire that would send forces to aid him in keeping a known enemy at bay; the modern American convokes a conference at Havana to make the western hemisphere secure from the clutches of an aggressor.

We fought in a World War to realize a president's daring dream "a war to end all war, and to make the world safe for democracy," to obtain security for minority groups on all continents, and now we have rushed pell mell into building a two-ocean navy, a peace army of a million men with all necessary mechanical and air accouterments to make life safe and secure in the states over which the American flag flies.

The quest for security led the French to spend their millions in building the Maginot line, and the Germans to counter with the West Wall. The quest for security for the people who sent them to the capital keeps the law-makers busy to create and revise Social Security Acts and Old Age pension plans. The quest for security for one's loved ones leads a man to strain his credit to pay the premiums on life insurance policies, and gives a talking

point to the liability accident and fire insurance salesman who warns: "Better be safe than sorry, you need security for your person and property."

The quest for security caused the graduating class of one of our largest eastern universities to answer the question, "What do you desire most, success or security?" more than seventy per cent in favor of security rather than success.

It being well established that the quest for security is one of man's major quests, the question might be well considered: How does he hunt security, and with what success?

He has hunted it through personal efforts, and with personal efforts combined with those of others in groups that grew larger until they have in some instances embraced all civilization. Man's efforts to secure physical security and immunity from disease has brought him as allies the medical men and the social minded leaders in every continent. His efforts to establish security in international relationships has led to treaties, associations of peoples, leagues of nations and alliances and ententes of every nature; some were loosely constructed and others as binding as human words can bind. His efforts to gain security of person has established traffic regulations, police patrols, restrictions of so-called liberties of individuals, and has outlawed many well established customs and habits. He has hunted security by scientific expeditions to far off places, by intricate studies in laboratories, and by studies of human adjustment problems. There is hardly any known trail wide enough to hold a human foot that man has not climbed in endless effort to discover for himself and for his kind, security.

Candor demands that two things be said in reference to this quest.

1. In many respects man has discovered or made possible a much greater security than was known in other generations. His quest has not been in vain. The policeman keeps a hundred houses from being robbed each night, and the red and green lights prevent a hundred accidents every evening.

2. Man has surely demonstrated both to himself and to the universe that he is not capable of producing security to anything like completeness. Houses are still robbed in so-called civilized centers. Nearly forty thousand people die each year in automobile wrecks. The War to End War sowed seeds for a conflagration more devastating than any yet seen, and the League of Nations, which sat upon her mountain of beauty in Europe, and smiled beneficently upon a world below, has had to creep out of the blazing continent, and seek refuge in North America like a million other homeless refugees. Despite labors spent to banish famine and want from the world, famine is stalking the roads of a dozen nations, and countless people will starve to death this winter.

Man has discovered the distance to the farthest fixed star in light-years, but he has not discovered security, and shows no likelihood of doing so. Man has invented machines which give ear and eye pictures of events many miles away, as colors and sounds are wafted to him by the very atmosphere, but he has not invented a way for man to rid himself of the gaunt spectre of insecurity which meets him in every condition. The history of man is the recorded story of shattered security.

I have taken all this time to bring you to read with me the answer to all the questions which assail the mind of man; the solution to the problems which cause statesmen to burn after-midnight lamps in lonely chancelleries.

It is the answer which the throne of God sends to the soul. It is sent not in proverb nor in enacted statute; not in abstract statement nor in paragraphed philosophy; but in song, the sweetest song that the hills of Judah ever heard, the song which the shepherd lad sings as he watches his flocks, and keeps them from wandering packs of wolves or wild bands of marauders. It is the song of security for the soul of man, a song which sings its way into heavy, troubled hearts because it wings its way under the guidance of God's spirit. Listen to its melody:

"The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul; he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies; thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever."

As the shepherd brings security to the sheep over whom he watches so the Lord brings security to my soul. The Lord is my security, my Shepherd; I shall not want. He is my security when bread fails. He is my security when toil fails. He is my security when the purse is empty. He is my security when the door of this fold is closing, and the sheep must be led into another fold. He makes us see the truth in de Vito's song:

"When you're a child, Death seems to be a place
Like Paris, California, or Palm Beach,
Or any other nice place out of reach
Where people stay till you forget their face . . .

"Then you are grown and Death is like a hawk,
A vicious bird of prey circling above,
Waiting to carry off the ones you love
And eat them in his aerie on a rock.

"When you are old, you suddenly are wise
And know Life as the monstrous bird of prey,
Eating men's hearts and plucking out their eyes,
Or destroying them some other subtler way—
Then you see Death, a kind hand everywhere
Snapping off lights that are too bright to bear."

I do know that with God there is security for the soul, the life and the whole personality. I do know that every quest for security without God has ended in failure, despair and tragedy. I do know that the universe belongs to God, and no security is possible for any alien to His love and plan and power. I do know that His is the gentleness of a mother, the wisdom of a father, and the tenderness of a child. I do know that His plans for all of us vastly exceed our own, his mercy extends infinitely beyond our cry for it, and His security is sufficient.

By the appropriation of the security manifest through Him that loved us, we are more than conquerors. "For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor principalities nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depths, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us

from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." The Lord is my Security. I shall not want. He leadeth me!

"In 'pastures green'? Not always. Sometimes He
Who knoweth best, in kindness leadeth me
In weary ways, where heavy shadows be.

"And by 'still waters'? No, not always so;
Ofttimes the heavy tempests round me blow,
And o'er my soul the waves and billows go.

"But when the storm beats loudest, and I cry
Aloud for help, the Master standeth by.
And whispers to my soul, 'Lo, it is I.'

"So, where He leads me, I can safely go,
And in the blest hereafter I shall know,
Why in His wisdom He hath led me so."

Second Sunday After Easter.

THEME: *Doubts—Harmful and Wholesome.*

EDWARD LAIRD MILLS.

TEXT: John 11:1-16; 14:1-7; 20:24-29.
HYMNS: "My Lord and Master."—*Woodlynn,* 11 10, 11 10.
"Not All the Blood of Beasts."—*St. Bride, S. M.*

The influence of Jesus manifested itself in concentric circles. There were first the three—Peter, James and John; then the twelve apostles; beyond them the seventy; and finally the five hundred. Among the twelve, in addition to the three best known, there were several interesting personalities: Judas, the treasurer, who betrayed Jesus; Andrew, the personal evangelist, who brought Peter to Jesus; Philip, who displayed unique ability as a questioner; Matthew, whose conversion took place amid such intriguing circumstances; and Thomas, who was possessed of qualities not always found in combination.

The significant references to Thomas appear in the Fourth Gospel, and there he is brought before us in the respective roles of inquirer, doubter and hero.

I.

The ability to ask questions is one of the distinguishing features of human kind—a child can ask them and a kitten cannot. The wise person will ask questions of a person who is likely to possess the requisite knowledge for answering them. Thus Thomas knew enough to take his questions to Jesus. His first one, "Lord, we know not whither Thou goest, and how can we know the way": showed a common but mistaken attitude, namely, that a perception of the goal is necessary to a knowledge of the way. That is not true. Someone has remarked that the rudder is at the stern of a boat or an idea. Move, then steer, is the proper procedure.

It is foolish to wait until one understands perfectly a system of thought or program of action before he begins to do something about it. In the realm of religion understanding follows upon action. "Obedience is the organ of

spiritual illumination," asserted a great preacher of the nineteenth century. And Jesus himself said, "He that doeth the will of God shall know of the doctrine." John Henry Newman was surely inspired when he wrote:

> "I do not ask to see
> The distant scene; one step enough for me."

Science and civilization are founded on faith no less than religion; and the faith found in them calls for the same reaction as that which expresses itself in religious adventure. A vital question of modern Christians concerns the basis of belief. What is it?

Some emphasize *authority*, and claim to be vehicles by which the knowledge and grace of God may come to the individual believer. Such a conception of the matter puts a person's investigating faculties to sleep. While it is conducive to peace of mind, it does not lead to that vital participation in the activities of the Kingdom which is the outcome of personal faith.

Some claim that *reason* is the basis of belief and that people must not have faith in anything which cannot be explained to man's intellectual satisfaction. Obviously this greatly limits the scope of religion and tends to make of it a mere humanism whose origin and end are alike obscure. People do not wait to use reason in other matters. They have a practical belief. Electricity is not understood by most people, but the number of electric devices used in modern business and in household life is large and increasing. In that matter people have learned to exercise faith without knowledge; and those who wish to go far in understanding spiritual truths must do the same. They will learn more of the truth as they move, and their rational explanation of the eternal mysteries will enlarge with the passage of time.

Many Protestants regard the *Bible* as a basis of belief and source of authority. That feeling is historic and dates from the Reformation, when the Book was regarded as infallible and thus qualified to take the place in Protestant thinking that the Pope had occupied in the eyes of Roman Catholics. Most Protestants regard the Bible as inspired, but many view it also as the product of writers who had the conception of the world popular in their time. Their remarks on astronomy, for instance, represented the Ptolemaic view of the universe rather than the Copernican. They used sunlight, but did not understand it. Moreover, there is progress in Biblical revelation. The Bible is not a single book, but a library of sixty-six books. It is the record of man's spiritual experience over a period of 1600 years. The word "faith" when used in Galatians has a much fuller meaning than the same word as used in Genesis. Jesus' teachings abolished certain antiquated ideas, such as revenge. His spirit, words and deeds constitute the norm by which all Scripture must be tested. Furthermore, individual texts are not to be taken by themselves but rather as parts of passages which must be regarded in the light of the circumstances under which they were written.

The fourth basis of belief is *Christian experience*. The believer trusts and feels and finally comes to know. Christian psychology has done much to open up this field in recent years. The Methodists, following the example of John Wesley and especially that of Charles, the poet of the Wesleyan revival, have laid great emphasis upon experience. Such hymns as, "O, For

a Thousand Tongues to Sing," and, "How Happy Every Child of Grace," express its beauty and power. The Society of Friends, which exercises an influence altogether out of proportion to its size, also holds to the authority of religious experience, although they find it differently than do the Methodists. Said a Quaker to John Wesley, "I speak as the Spirit moves." Wesley's reply was, "I speak that the Spirit may move."

The conclusion of the matter seems to be that no one of these bases of belief is adequate by itself, but that each of them plays a necessary and wholesome part in developing a well-rounded Christian life. Quite certainly Christians today are in a much better position than was Thomas. They have the benefit of two thousand years of Christian history, they possess the glorious example of saints and martyrs and it is possible for them to see how all four bases of belief converge and strengthen each other. There is something in the aspect of authority; reason plays a part; the Bible is the greatest record of spiritual adventure in the world; and immediate, vital Christian experience may be a happy fact in the life of every Christian.

II.

The second role in which Thomas is pictured is that of *doubter*. This is the most popular conception of the apostle. Anyone who is overly skeptical today is called a "doubting Thomas." His position was expressed by the words, "Except I see I will not believe." He demanded evidence. That sort of honest intellectual doubt is to be desired rather than feared. The doubts that produce a bad harvest are those which spring from a wicked life or from intellectual laziness. There is much modern doubt of this latter sort. People are disinclined to accept the moral restraints inseparable from Christian discipleship and so take refuge behind alleged intellectual doubts. There are others who do not wish to take chances or go to any trouble, and so they accept uncritically the skeptical attitude of those with whom they associate from day to day.

The doubts of Hamlet as pictured in Shakespeare's great play were debilitating in their influence. He did not know what to do or which way to turn. As a result, he did nothing. That was the tragedy.

But the doubts of Thomas did not affect his actions. He continued to associate with the other apostles as he had been accustomed to do.

There are some hypocrites *within* the church, but there are vastly more without. The man who says he is not a Christian, because Christianity does not appeal to his reason, is a hypocrite unless he is willing to go where his reason is most likely to be enlightened. Such men should evidence their sincerity by attending church and prayer meeting and by associating with Christian believers. Thus they will be most likely to find the evidence they claim to desire. Thomas doubted and he had the good sense to go where his doubts were most likely to be dissolved.

Moreover, as his doubts did not affect his standing with the other apostles, so the doubts which afflict individuals today should not interfere with their standing in Christian fellowship, but should call forth every assistance in the working out of their individual problems. In most cases they will come out where Thomas did and be able to say with him, "My Lord and my God."

III.

The third aspect of Thomas to which the inspired writer directs our attention is that of *hero*. When the news of the death of Lazarus came to Jesus and his apostles, as they were encamped beyond the Jordan, whither they had been driven by the fear of persecution, it was Thomas who bravely said, "Let us also go (back) that we may die with him."

Thus Thomas took a prime place in the long line of Christian heroes. Every generation since has furnished additions to the list. The phrase, *Deus Vult*, "God wills it," roused the masses to action in the time of the great Crusades. Melville B. Cox declared, "Though a thousand fall, let not Africa be given up." Much modern Christianity has become easy and indifferent, and the way of the Cross, though narrow, is far from crowded. Probably the finest types of Christianity to be found in the world today are those in Russia, Korea and "occupied" China, where great persecutions are being endured, and where the "iron and granite" so necessary to Christian character are being developed on a large scale.

In Russia it is said that the peasants "build temples in their hearts." Thus the destruction or perversion of their material cathedrals becomes of small importance. Similarly they learn to repeat from memory large sections of Scripture, so that the ban on Bible distribution loses much of its significance.

Thus the lesson of Thomas teaches us that the spirit of inquiry is wholesome, that intellectual doubt is not a fatal thing, and that neither necessarily operates to prevent the development of a magnificent heroism.

Modern advances in science and invention and current theories of philosophy may present new problems to the Christian disciple, but the methods employed by Thomas will be found useful in solving them. A man who is either inquirer or doubter or both may yet become a hero.

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

The Early Church Meeting Human Needs.

LESSON: Acts 4:32—7:60. Print Acts 4:32-35; 6:1-7.

GOLDEN TEXT: "And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and soul." Acts 4:32.

DEVOTIONAL READING: I John 3:13-18.

INTER. & SR. TOPIC: Helping One Another.

Y. P. & ADULTS: Voluntary Christian Sharing.

In verses 32 and 33 we have a picture of the Church Beautiful. The fierce shock of opposition had not shattered the Church but had strengthened it.

In chapter 3: 41-47, the first mention is made of this community of good. The elements evident in the life of the Church at this point are: 1. Unity, "They were all of one heart"; 2. Unselfishness, "All things were held in common"; 3. Power, (verse 33). Their power came from the Holy Spirit, the giver of power, who made their witness effective in leading people to believe; 4. Their Witness Bearing. They were telling of the things which they knew. They were preaching a living Saviour, the true, everlasting Mes-

siah and King, whose work and words had been sealed and testified to by the Resurrection; 5. They were experiencing favor with God and man.

The second picture from our text gives us the Church Bountiful (verses 34-37). Where the spirit of Christ is resident there will always be found the spirit of benevolence. If Divine fire is within, light will shine and heat will radiate.

The second part of the lesson deals with the appointing of the deacons. Among the early Christians at Jerusalem were two classes of Jews: the native Jews of Palestine and the Hellenists, or Grecians, who were true Jews from foreign lands but who spoke the Greek instead of the Hebrew and whose mode of life and thinking was Grecian. These latter Jews complained that in the distribution of the funds for the poor, their widows were neglected.

As soon as the feeling of dissatisfaction became known, wise and generous measures were adopted in the most Christian spirit to meet the situation. A general meeting of the Church was called. The Apostles asked that seven laymen be chosen in order to take charge of "the serving of the tables." These men were the first deacons. They were to be men who had proved themselves to be honest and trustworthy filled with the Holy Spirit, men of wisdom and good judgment, common-sense, businesslike men.

In some churches there is a tendency to minimize the dignity and importance of the work of the deacon. The qualifications set forth above should counteract any such tendency. The position of deacon is one of honor and responsibility.

EVENING SERMON

THEME: ***Life's Unexpected Crosses.***

CHARLES F. BANNING, D. D.

TEXT: Acts 2:23.

Simon of Cyrene was on his way to Jerusalem to observe the Passover. Jesus was just being led out through the streets of the Holy City to Calvary to be crucified. The strain under which Jesus had been had taken his strength and he fell under the heavy cross which he was bearing. The Pharisees and the Roman soldiers were in a hurry to get the wretched business over with and they had no time to wait for an exhausted man. Simon of Cyrene was just passing. Would he volunteer to bear his cross. No he did not. Was he a follower of Jesus? No, he probably had never heard of him. He a strict Jew would hardly choose to bear an accursed cross for a criminal. He had no choice. The gospel writers agree that he was *compelled* to bear the cross. It was a heavy load to carry up a steep hill. He did not deserve it. He could not tell why. He simply knew that *he was compelled to bear AN UNEXPECTED CROSS.*

Simon of Cyrene is typical of all life. He is only one of the many who have been compelled to bear heavy unexpected crosses. Life is full of Simons and unexpected crosses. Simon is not the only one who wonders why he must bear his cross. Simons that wonder why and crosses that are heavy and hard to bear have been known in every generation. Job was a good man.

He was one who feared and obeyed God. He was no doubt one of the best men morally and religiously of his day. Yet an unexpected cross came to him. His health, his family and his property were all taken from him. His friends turned against him and accused him of evil. "Why should the righteous suffer?" Job wondered and no answer came to him. Many of those who listen this morning have asked that same question and no answer has come.

Jesus was in the garden praying. He was shrinking from the cross that he was being compelled to bear. He cried out for a way of escape but no answer came. As he hung upon that cross which he did not deserve the next day, he cried out "My God, My God, Why?" and no answer came to him. As you bear your cross and wonder why you are compelled to bear it do not be surprised or discouraged if no answer comes to you. Jesus had to wait for his answer.

All of us, sooner or later find that we must bear our own crosses. We find that we have a thorn in the flesh as had Paul. We do not choose it. We may not deserve it. We would shun it if we could but there is not a way of escape. The important question is not why we must bear these crosses. Neither is the question of the source of suffering the most important. The real question for us is HOW SHALL WE BEAR THESE UNEXPECTED CROSSES OF LIFE. What difference will they make in our lives? Shall we conquer or shall we allow them to conquer us?

I.

The test of life does not come when our plans are running smoothly but when we are compelled to bear one of life's unexpected crosses. When trouble comes we have three choices. There are three things we may do. The first is that we may try to escape. This is the way of cowardice. Judas chose this path. Twenty thousand people have tried this method during the past year and committed suicide. Countless others have tried to escape by the use of alcohol and drugs. It is simply running from an enemy that sooner or later must be faced.

The second choice is the way of defeat. Thousands of people, when some handicap comes into their lives, give up in despair. They become bitter and spend the rest of their lives cursing their luck, pitying themselves and telling others what they would do if they had good health, if they had an education, if they had money, if they had an opportunity. It is the way of defeat. Anyone who pities himself and explains why he could not succeed, what he would do if—is one who has been defeated by his unexpected cross.

The third alternative is to accept life's unexpected cross as a challenge, as an opportunity, as a blessing. It is the Christian's answer to the question, the Christian's solution to the problem. Look at Simon of Cyrene as they compel him to bear the cross. He does not deserve this injustice. With a smile he takes up his cross and the procession moves on out to Calvary.

Paul had a thorn in the flesh. He did not try to escape. He did not sit around pitying himself and telling what he would do if he did not have it. He did not get bitter because God did not remove it. He overcame and conquered it and it became a source of power and grace in his life.

John Bunyan wanted to preach. Then came an unexpected cross. He was thrown into Bedford Prison. What should he do? Pity himself? Forsake God and rebel against him? Why should he be kept in prison when he wanted to preach? No answer came. The important question is always *how* not *why*. John Bunyan, while in Bedford prison, wrote "Pilgrim's Progress" and accomplished more while bearing his cross than all the rest of his life.

Abraham Lincoln bore many unexpected crosses. Truly he was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. Truly he bore many unexpected crosses. Did they defeat him? Did he waste his time in self-pity? Was there any bitterness in his heart? No he used each difficulty as a stepping stone to triumph.

Not long ago I heard of a violinist who was playing a very difficult piece of music. When he came to the most difficult part of the solo which he was playing, when he needed every bit of talent and training that he had, his A string snapped. Why did this have to be? Why was it that at the very time when he needed every resource at his command in perfect order that his most needed string should break? He hesitated just a second then caught himself and played on through the difficult number on three strings. When he had completed the solo he received a tremendous cheer partly because of the skill and ability with which he had played but largely because he had not let a broken string defeat him.

You and I know what that means. We face a great opportunity. We are working out some plan that is very dear to us. A dream is about to come true, an ideal is at the point of becoming a reality. Then a day comes just as we are ready to enter the door of opportunity that an unexpected cross is thrust upon us. One of the strings on which we are playing snaps. What shall we do? Shall we explain how well we might have played had not the A string broken? Shall we accept defeat or play on to victory on three strings?

When trouble comes into your life it does one of two things to you. It leaves you narrow, bitter, with less of faith in yourself, others and God, with less of sympathy and understanding, with little resource with which to meet other problems of life; or it leaves you bigger, broader, with a kindly spirit, with a firmer faith, with a sympathetic feeling toward others who are bearing crosses, with a hand that is willing and better able to lead and to lift others. The difference is not in the cross but in you. The same sun that melts wax hardens clay. The same trouble that defeats another may be a source of strength for you.

II.

Life's true meaning, that which gives it its true value, lies close to the unexpected cross. It was Jesus who said that those who would be his disciples must take up their cross and follow him. Had Simon of Cyrene never borne his cross we would never have heard of him. I am sure that Simon looked back to that cross as the greatest event of his life. Now he, his sons and many of his neighbors and friends are Christians. That day and that unexpected cross were the beginning of it all.

Paul prayed that the thorn in the flesh might be removed, but who knows

but that the courage, the fortitude, the patience, and grace which Paul had in prison and in bearing persecution did not come from bearing this unexpected cross. "Deliver me from this prison" no doubt John Bunyan prayed fervently but now we see that being thrown into prison was his greatest blessing. It gave him the opportunity to write, "Pilgrim's Progress."

Jesus prayed, "Father if it be possible let this cup pass from me." But it did not pass and he was compelled to bear his cross. That cross he has transformed from a mark of shame to a sign of triumph. Then it meant shame and defeat. Now it means victory. Jesus is our Saviour not in spite of the cross but because of the cross.

You and I may never know nor understand why we are compelled to bear these heavy unexpected crosses that are thrust upon us till we cross the narrow sea. We know that they come. We know that there is a plan and a purpose back of them. We know that He who holds the earth in the hollow of his hand has a heart of love toward us. We know that it is in the bearing of these crosses that life's true meaning is revealed. We know that life's sweetest music is often played on three strings. We know that often we are compelled to make music with a broken heart. By looking unto Him who is the author and perfector of our faith we can say with Paul "In all these things I am more than conqueror through Him that loved us."

"If we could push ajar the gates of life,
And stand within, and all God's working see,
We could interpret all the doubts and strife,
And for each mystery could find a key!

"And if, through patient toil we reach the land
Where tired feet, with sandals loosed, may rest,
When we shall clearly know and understand,
I think that we will say, "God knew the best!"

MID-WEEK SERMON

THEME: ***Jesus' Cross: Why Not Others?***

TEXT: John 19:17.

What brought you here tonight? Home training; general custom; conviction. Good things. But basically: a young Jew was crucified outside Jerusalem more than 1900 years ago.

The Persistence of the Cross: Strange how the Cross persists through the centuries. The Jewish nation was destroyed thirty years after Calvary. The land passed from conqueror to conqueror: Roman, Saracen, Turk, British. The Cross stills towers. Nothing like it in all history. Rome crucified him. Athens mocked him. But nothing of them commands universal recognition and respect in our day. Men have planned monuments to be eternal, but they have crumbled. The Cross, two rough, ugly timbers, decayed and disappeared. But the symbol persists, and tens of thousands gather together tonight at its foot.

Why Not Other Crosses?: There were, and there are, other crosses. Two men were crucified with Christ, two thieves. But the world pays little heed

to their crosses. It is the one in the center only that holds attention. We have taken the cross to symbolize great mental anguish, splendid human sacrifice, love unto death, and life in selfless service and devotion. There is a long, long list of such crosses, but the world pays little heed to them. Only the Cross of Christ arrests us.

Why This Persistence?: Because Jesus lives! He brought life and immortality to light from the Cross. He hung on the Cross "for us men and for our salvation." The Cross symbolizes all he was, and is, and does.

TOPICS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE'S SOCIETIES

CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR: Y. P.—Following Jesus—Cost of Discipleship. Luke 14: 25-33. John 15:18-27.
Jr.—Loyalty. What Can we do to Help China? I Thess. 1:2-6.
LUTHER LEAGUE: Sr.—School and College, Why Go? Prov. 2:1-9.
Y. P.—Education. II Tim. 3:14-17.
Inter.—Christians in China. Matt. 28:16-20.
WALTHER LEAGUE: Service Project. Arrange window display for Holy Week and Easter, with message of Peace found only in Christ.

FOR THE BULLETIN BOARD

Sinner or Saviour? It depends on whether you are with the mob or the thief.
Snakes are snakes regardless of size.
Strive to be as well as to do.
Nothing brings man nearer heaven than honest labor.
Love's wages are the best of hire.
Education is a process not a product.
Man can't be detached from God and the world at one time.
Dreams don't come true unless one wakes up.
Has your life been a cafeteria life—self serve?

MAY, FIRST SUNDAY

CALL TO WORSHIP: "Jehovah is my light and my salvation. Whom shall I fear? Jehovah is the strength of my life."
PSALM: 118.
PRELUDE: Nocturno—*Quigley.*
ANTHEM: Behold There Shall Be a Day—*Wooler.*
OFFERTORY: Andante—*Lacey.*
POSTLUDE: Scherzoso—*Rheinberger.*
OFFERTORY SENTENCE: "God called us not for uncleanness, but in sanctification. Therefore he that rejecteth, rejecteth not man but God, Who giveth His Holy Spirit unto you."
OFFERTORY PRAYER: We give thanks to Thee for the privilege of partnership in Thy work. Our strength is at Thy command, as is our worldly goods. We pray Thee for deeper understanding of that which is Truth, and of Thee. Help us, we beseech Thee, to grow in grace and love toward Thee and our brethren.
BENEDICTION: The peace of God which passeth understanding attend thee all the way, even unto eternity.

SERMONS

THEME: *Marred Vessels.*

(Suggested as Baccalaureate also.)

HAROLD E. CARLSON, D. D.

TEXTS: "The vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hands of the potter." Jer. 18:4.
"There is a new creation whenever a man comes to be in Christ." II Cor. 5:17.
HYMNS: "Have Thine Own Way, Lord!"—5s, 4s.
"Take My Life, and let it be."—*Hendon,* 7s.

The first statement sounds as hopeless as the other does hopeful. All of us resist the touch of the Master's hands in more ways than one. We are obstinate and stubborn in God's hands so that He is not able to work out His plans and purposes through us. And there is only one result when we resist God. We become marred vessels. What a holy purpose Jesus had for Judas! But Judas resisted the Master's touch and ended in the potter's field. He cheated himself out of the blessing and usefulness and joy that God had purposed for his life.

There are foreign substances of various kinds that make us the sort of human clay which resists the skillful, loving touch of the Hand of God.

1. One of these substances is worldliness. There are those church members who have absorbed the spirit of the world.

Such a case is as tragic as it is confusing, human clay that God must break upon the wheel of circumstances and wholly remake in order to have a vessel fit for His eternal plan and purpose. If God shall ever be able to shape such into a vessel of honor, it will only be through re-creation. Like Demas of old many have forsaken God because the present age has taken possession of them with its luring but empty promises. Though there may be worldly church-members there cannot be worldly Christians.

2. Another substance that makes marred vessels of church-members is luke-warmness. Some church-members who profess to be followers of Jesus are like Peter—they follow their Lord afar off. There was the time when Peter followed his Lord at a distance—half-heartedly. They have not wholly

renounced allegiance to their Lord but they are utterly wanting in holy zeal. It is needless to say that they have no burden on their hearts for the Kingdom.

The only time that the Scriptures represent our Lord as disgusted is with the luke-warm church-members. He wished that they were either hot or cold. If they are not out and out for Christ, they are only marred vessels in the Hands of God—vessels of dishonor and not vessels of honor for they are a load and not a lift to Him.

3. Worldliness and luke-warmness are resistant substances in human clay, that make church-members marred vessels. Another substance that makes them obstinate clay in the Hands of the Potter is self-importance or pride.

One Sunday morning four families from a neighbor church came to the altar requesting to unite with my church. They felt that they had been slighted in their church. Invariably such members never have enough of the grace of God to be an asset to the life of any church. Within a year all of those four families had faded out of my church just as they had from the church they came from, save one good man.

That man became one of the most consecrated and devoted Christ-like members of that church. Is pride and selfishness and self-importance making you a marred vessel in the Hands of God?

4. A fourth kind of grit that makes a church-member human clay that resists God's touch is what may be called "Second Things."

Souls are more important than church duties. Even the minister must learn this truth. Church people become so absorbed in carrying on church duties that they are in danger of losing sight of the sole purpose of the Church.

Some years ago I had brought home to me the tragedy of becoming a marred vessel in the Hands of God by giving myself to second things when first things were calling. During the week before Christmas a lonely, poor, old man who had left the disposal of what few worldly goods he possessed in my hands, was rushed to the hospital. He had suffered a stroke. I promised I would go out to the hospital, but I was supervising some Christmas decorating of the church and I had to give some attention to it that morning. When I was ready to start for the hospital the telephone rang and the hospital informed me that my old friend had just passed on. I, who was virtually the only person on earth to whom this man had bared the secrets of his soul, failed him. I had become absorbed in secondary and external things, a marred vessel in the Hands of God. God could not use me for the purpose He had for me.

5. But if we can claim that we are not marred vessels because we have no such grit in us as worldliness, luke-warmness, pride, or putting second things first, there is one thing that makes most all of us marred vessels in God Hands and that is spiritual laziness.

The Apostle James says: "To him that knoweth to do good and doeth it not, to him it is sin." The Rich Young Ruler who turned his back upon Jesus was a marred vessel. One entire parable of Jesus was a rebuke to the slothful servant who hid his money in the ground. The Master once cursed a fig tree, not because it bore poisonous fruit but because it bore no fruit at all. He taught that every tree that does not bring forth good fruit is to

be hewn down, and that every branch that does not bear fruit is to be cut off. In order to be a marred vessel, therefore, it is not necessary to do some positive wrong: it is only necessary to be useless.

Now what did Jeremiah's potter do with the marred vessel in his hands? Did he throw it away? Did he get a new supply of clay? No! We read that "he made it again another vessel." He pressed the clay into a shapeless mass again and worked it over a second time. He could make another vessel out of the marred one because he was a capable, efficient potter.

What does God do with us when we resist Him and mar our souls? When we disappoint Him by our worldliness, and lukewarmness, and pride, and putting second things first, and uselessness, does He throw us away? Ah, no! When we become marred vessels God sets right to work to make new vessels out of us if only we will yield ourselves to Him as proper clay. And only He who is our Maker can be our Re-Maker.

Just after the War I had a battered trombone which I prized because of its rich, full tone. I had used it during the War. In three different parts of the country I had taken it to musical shops for repair. But in each place I had been told that they were not able to do the job without impairing the tone. One day I took the instrument to a fourth shop. To my surprise they accepted the job and made an agreement with me that if the tone was impaired there would be no charge. A few weeks later I went back for my instrument. A boy pointed me to several instruments which had been repaired. "My instrument is not among them," I said after I had looked over the different repaired trombones in the case. Just then the manager came in. He picked up one of those very instruments I had been examining and handed it to me, saying: "Oh, yes. This is your instrument. Looks like a new one. And the tone is perfect." I tried it. The tone was perfect. "But tell me," I asked in astonishment, "how have you been able to make this perfect repair? Several shops in different parts of the country had told me that it was impossible without impairing the tone." "I did not do the job myself," replied the man. "I sent the instrument to a friend of mine who has long years been the last word on this make at the factory." Then he pulled out a factory repair tag from his pocket. He pointed me to a line. It read: "I made this instrument just before the War."

Ah! There was the secret. He had created it. No wonder that he could repair it. No one expects that a man who does not make trombones can repair one perfectly. But everybody has reason to believe that the man who can make a perfect trombone can also redeem it when it is necessary. God has created us in His own image. But we have often been obstinate clay and have become marred vessels in His Hands. The God who created us can also redeem us.

A drunken man came down the sawdust trail during one of Sam Jones' evangelistic meetings. He reached up his hand and said thick-tongued: "You made a new man of me fifteen years ago." Sam Jones gave him a sharp look and said: "Yes, you look like the kind of a new man I could make." Only He who has made us can re-make us!

God has given His world a Divine Potter in the Person of His Son who can make new creations of us. And Christ does not make new creations by mending here a little and there a little, covering a bad spot here and a bad spot there. He makes new vessels of us by remolding us throughout. He who transformed Simon into a new creation can transform our lives, if we permit Him, into vessels for His own use.

The Divine process by which God makes new vessels out of marred ones is suggested in the words: "There is a new creation whenever a man comes to be in Christ." That process is an act of divine grace. It is not accomplished by ourselves, or by others, but only by God in Christ.

But what does it mean to be "in Christ" and therefore be a new vessel?

It means first of all to have been laid hold of by the Hand of God. It means to possess, to be possessed by, the Holy Spirit. It means to be born from above and know that we are alive now. It means to have had the experience of divine forgiveness of our sins and to have yielded ourselves to Christ. It simply means that we have come into the assurance of having been found by God in Christ, and to be "in Christ"—to be a new creation—is also to come under the law of the Spirit and be set free from the law of sin and death.

Not far from my home is a market. Lately, across the entire front of the building, was a sign; "Under New Management." The merchandise had been entirely rearranged throughout the store. What was the purpose of the sign and the object of the re-arrangement of all the merchandise? It was more than to inform the buying public that this market had changed hands of ownership. The purpose was solely to convey to the public that it was no longer controlled by the policies of the former owner. A man who is "in Christ" is one who reveals to the world that he is no longer under the domination of sin and death, but under the Law of the Spirit.

But to be "in Christ" means, besides having been laid hold on by God in Christ and having come under the Law of the Spirit, also to have spiritually entered into the fellowship of the sufferings of Christ.

Edith Wharton has a story about a handsome but weak man. He is a perpetual thief. One day he came home to his wife and said: "You've married a thief." He expected her to leave him. Instead, she sat down at his feet and looked up at him and said: "We'll bear this together. I married you and so we're one." To be "in Christ" is to suffer for and with men by sharing their lives for redemptive purpose. In the measure that we share the sufferings of Christ for the redemption of our fellowmen we become more like Him who gave Himself that we might have life and have it more abundantly.

Are you a marred vessel in the Hands of God? No one can claim that he has not been marred by worldliness, luke-warmness, pride, putting second things first, and spiritual idleness. The question is not, Can God remold and re-make us into new vessels fit for the Master's use? but: Are we willing to surrender ourselves as plastic clay which the Divine Potter can remold and reshape? If we yield ourselves to Him, He will remake us. Are we willing to enter into such union with Christ that we gladly accept His sufferings? Do we really want to be new vessels that will contain the peace that passeth understanding? Can we truly pray:

"Have Thine own way, Lord! Have Thine own way!
Thou art the Potter; I am the clay;
Mould me, and make me, after Thy will,
While I am waiting, yielded and still?"

Third Sunday After Easter.

THEME: *The Sacredness of Human Life.*

W. FRANKLIN HARKEY, D. D.

TEXT: "And Satan answered the Lord, and said, Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life." Job 2:4.

HYMNS: "Who trusts in God . . ."—*Constance,* 8, 7, 8, 7, *D*
"Teach me, my God and King."—*St. Andrews, S. M.*

The book of Job is the greatest drama ever written. Here are questions concerning the problems of Providence, suffering, the problem of evil, immortality, and life here and now. These questions have been tugging at the human heart since time began. They lose none of their interest or freshness because they are old. That these questions receive different answers and oftentimes answers that do not satisfy us only shows that the human heart searches for the best for this life and the life which is to come.

There is no question raised in the book of Job around which more thought has been centered than the question concerning life. For that matter, the Bible has much to say about life, its origin, nature, and purpose. In no book of the Bible will we find more searching questions about life than we find here in Job. That the statement of the text comes from Satan himself does not make the remark any less important. For men have ever asked the question, "For what is your life?" In the specific outline of why He came into the world Jesus said, "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly."

When we come to analyze life there are certain aspects that stand out. It is not literally true that all a man hath will he give for his life, but life is deeper in its motives than that. There is a sacredness about life which we are likely to overlook. Life is sacred because God created it. Man was created in the image of God. What a travesty modern life enacts on this God-created being! How cheap and insignificant life is as we view it in the world today! What does the god of war care about life? Satan has always employed every device for the destruction of life, wars which mean the slaughtering of millions, crime, the liquor traffic and other modern devices. Life is cheap as we view it through the eyes of the world; but it is infinitely precious in the mind of God.

The love of life is universal. Therein, the statement of Satan is correct. Many of the questions and problems of life are local and provincial, but the love of life is found among all races. And underlying this fact is the passion for individual well being. Whatever conditions may be, whether extreme riches or direst poverty, the desire for life, and for the best life, is common. Among those whom we feel have the least to live for there is often the strongest desire to live.

Men and women are wide in their interests but their desires are one. Some live for self, what they can get out of life, what they can enjoy, and at the end of life they go out without leaving any noble monuments to service and helpfulness. Their whole outlook on life is material. Sin has marred life for many. From the lives of many people all holy purposes and incentives are shut out. Life's only purpose is one continual indulgence. Sin not only mars life, but thwarts the purpose of God for life. Sin is missing the mark,

the failure of life to attain what God intended it to be. God made man in His likeness. It was Satan who led him into sin.

Moreover, the life which God has given is good. By "total depravity," the theologians did not mean that life was wholly bad, but they did mean that man's sin made life less than that which God planned that it should be. Through sin man lost his fellowship with God. Jesus was always talking about the possibility of this fellowship being restored. He was able to give to men the power to remake life and to restore the image of God in man. Jeremiah saw the marred vessel in the potter's house. He saw the potter remake the vessel, and to Jeremiah there came the thought of God's power to remake life. Jesus taught that a man or woman who had fallen all the way down the moral stairs of life could go back up,—not in their own strength but in the power which He could give to them. In that thought is the hope for life.

The true conception of life is revealed in noble living. Our Lord emphasized the fact that, "A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." In the story which all men have called "The Rich Fool" is seen a man who was a genius in the practical things of life. He knew the ways of business. Apparently he believed that the chief end of man was to get on and accumulate the goods of this world, but his great mistake was in the neglect of his soul. Oftentimes nowadays the question is raised as to whether or not the teachings of Jesus are applicable to life. They become effective and reasonable when put into practice. The fact that these principles are seldom seen operative in life does not invalidate their claim.

Life's true meaning can only be reached in fellowship with God. In Christ our Lord this broken fellowship with God is restored. The men and the women who have counted for most in life have been those who walked with God. They have lived above Satan's idea, "Skin for skin." It has been theirs to give life sacrificially and unselfishly in the fight for righteousness. They have seen life with all of its problems and at the same time they have sensed the spirit of the Eternal, and God has been very real in their lives. Horace Bushnell gave no greater message to the world than his great sermon on the theme, "Every man's life a plan of God." When life is looked upon in the light of that great thought its sacredness will be maintained. Job never understood the meaning of half the questions that were raised in his mind. But, something finer than answers was given to him. To him was given a vision of God. After that vision came a vision of himself, and the two caused Job to repent in dust and ashes. Paul rose no higher in his conception of life for himself than he does when he exclaims, "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain."

The sacredness of life finds its ultimate in the responsibility that every man has to make life worthwhile. The latter part of Job's life was made fruitful and worthwhile because of a new vision of God. His confession of faith rises to new heights when he exclaims, "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore, I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." So must every man who comes to the realization of his own need and the holiness of God. It is this vital experience of faith that makes life worthwhile. It is an experimental knowledge of God. Can we point out a greater need for ourselves than this?

Jesus was always emphasizing this fact. He said, "I am come that they might have life." He lifted men's idea of God and of life. All life was sacred. Why will men seek to devour each other? Life is worthwhile. It has been given by God for a noble purpose. To mar or hinder the beauty

of it is to commit sin. When we refuse to accept God's plan for life all kinds of miseries follow. Let it be emphasized Life may be cheap in the thinking of the world, but it is infinitely precious in the mind of God. There is no profit to any man if he should gain the whole world and lose his life.

Before us, then, stands the continuing challenge of Jesus to live as He would have us live. Said He, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." Jesus had unbrokenly the sense of Divine companionship, "I am not alone, the Father is with me." Life for Him meant a blessed service. It should mean that for all His followers. These great imperatives face us, "Go, teach, preach, help, lift, serve."

The disciple is not above his Lord. We, too, must serve. If life is so sacred, then, it must be turned into unselfish and loving service. The history of the Christian church bears testimony to the countless men and women who have given their lives to the cause of Christ. In every age there have been a goodly number who have volunteered to carry the Gospel. At the heart of their message has been this old story of the preciousness of human life. Every soul is dear unto God. Sometime before he passed on to his reward Lord Shaftesbury who had done so much to show the value of human life spoke to Parliament and moved all hearts when he said, "My Lords, I hate to think of leaving the world with so much misery in it."

Holy living and zealous service render life doubly sacred. It is thus given to God and then yielded to His service. Those who have viewed the noble statue of General Chinese Gordon in Trafalgar Square and have seen the monument in St. Paul's Cathedral will be reminded that General Gordon was not only a statesman, soldier, but also a great Christian. He believed that Christ was his Saviour and the only hope of the world. This is the inscription on his monument in St. Paul's, "At all times and everywhere he gave his strength to the weak, his substance to the poor, his sympathy to the suffering, and his heart to God."

When life is lived in that fashion there need be no despair as to the outcome of society. What profanes life is selfishness. Its sacredness is revealed when man seeks God and dedicates his life to the progress of that which is good. Such a life lived in harmony with God here demands a life hereafter. The question of Job, "If a man die shall he live again?" finds its answer in the vision of God which was given to Job.

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

The Church Enlarging Its Fellowship.

LESSON: Acts 8. Print Acts 8:1-8, 14-17, 25.

GOLDEN TEXT: They therefore that were scattered abroad went about preaching the word. Acts 8:4.

DEVOTIONAL READING: Isaiah 42:1-8.

INTER. & SR. TOPIC: Sharing Christ With Others.

Y. P. & ADULTS: Sharing Christ With Others.

Throughout the history of the Church, the secret of its progress and the days of its fullest and most triumphant advance lies in the witness-bearing of the common member of the Church. Every member is a missionary. The

membership of the early Church grew because the people of the Church went everywhere preaching the Gospel.

Significant is the fact that a great persecution was the means of this dispersion and the enlarging fellowship of the Church. To kick a fire is a poor way to put it out, for every blazing ember will start a flame in the place where it falls.

The persecution to which the infant Church was subjected had four results: 1. a testing, sifting process, that kept many of the careless and ungodly from joining the movement from mere popular feeling; 2. it kept the Church from stagnation, from living for itself and seeking its own good. It introduced new work, new activities, new interests, and new fields. The safety and happiness of the Church has always depended under God on its aggressive force in the world. Stagnation is death. 3. It spread the Gospel into new fields,—Phoenicia, Antioch, and Cypress. (See 11:19.) The enemy sought to destroy by scattering the good seed but increased the harvest. 4. The thought and mission of the disciples were broadened.

Emphasize the far-reaching movement of Divine Providence; the fact that the early Church was free from dead conservatism. It had a perfect reverence for its earliest forms and the most perfect freedom to adapt that form to conditions and needs.

EVENING SERMON

THEME: ***The Tree of Life.***
(Commencement).

PAUL S. LEINBACH, D. D., LITT. D.

TEXT: "And Moses cried unto the Lord; and the Lord showed him a tree which when he had cast into the waters, the waters were made sweet." Ex. 15:25.

HYMNS: "Thy Way, Not Mine, O Lord."—*Ibstone,* 66, 66.
"O Thou From Whom All Goodness Flows."—*Redhead, C. M.*

It was a critical time in the history of the chosen people. Wearied by their long march, they were suffering from an almost intolerable thirst. How their hearts beat with joy when they came at last to Marah and saw water! But, alas, the water was so bitter that they could not drink it. They were physically weak and mentally distraught and sank back in despair. Then Moses showed his greatness as a leader. He did not look down; that would have meant only despair. He did not merely look around; that would have meant confusion and bewilderment. But he was wise enough to look up; that meant confidence and courage.

All of us, sooner or later in life, come to Marah. We find bitter waters in the cup of human experience. Like Moses, may we be wise enough to cry unto the Lord. What better can we do in our helplessness as we face life's inscrutable mysteries? We may not at once see the sun shining; we may have periods of shock, loneliness, emptiness of heart, when arms reach out vainly for lost possessions or departed loved ones. We may not be able at first to see or to be reconciled, because we try to understand instead of learn-

ing to trust; and so we may be inclined to murmur and complain against the providence of God; like Rachel, we may "refuse to be comforted." But if we continue to look up the answer will come. After all, we are like children crying in the night; like infants crying for the light; and with no language but a cry. Speak to Him in faith, and He will speak in love.

A man said to me some years ago, because he did not receive what he had asked for in prayer, that he had lost his faith in prayer. I said that was all right, and he looked at me in astonishment. "I do not ask you," I said, "to have faith in prayer. I ask you to have faith in the God to whom you pray."

We see in this story from the history of Israel how the grief of the trustful soul is transfigured. God reveals to His people a tree of comfort and blessing —even in Marah—and the bitterest waters are made sweet.

1. One branch of this tree of heavenly consolation is *the blessing of human sympathy*. We have sometimes been so accustomed to distinguish between divine and human sympathy as to belittle the latter. We say "mere human words cannot reach the heart." Of course, there is a difference in degree between divine sympathy and the sympathy of men, but real human sympathy is an echo of the divine. How Jesus yearned for it in the critical periods of His life, especially when He was in Gethsemane alone! As followers of the consoling Christ, we are called to be sons of consolation, to weep with those who weep. It is a balm to bleeding hearts to have true friends who come with a warm hand-clasp and an arm around our shoulders, and show by their halting, broken words that their hearts go out to us in our sorrow. A business man who was stricken suddenly with what seemed like a fatal disease, but who after long weeks came back from the valley of the shadow, said: "I never knew I had so many friends." The blessing of human sympathy had made him a changed man, for never again could he doubt that he was surrounded by loving hearts. Herein lies perhaps the greatest power of a Christian minister—the grace to show amid the sufferings and sorrows of his people that he has a great pastor's heart and is indeed a son of consolation.

2. *Memory*. In some wonderful way God weaves the best things of bygone days into a beautiful memory. This is an important branch in the tree of heavenly consolation. Many a soul's sorrow has been chastened by such a glorious vision that lingers in the heart and transfigures the very face of grief. Say what we will, the past has inspirations as well as warnings for the people of God. We say: "Of all the sad words of tongue or pen, the saddest are these, 'It might have been.' " Yes, this is true, but it is also true that "It is better than to have loved and lost than never to have loved at all." What an inspiration it is to remember these dear friends who have gone out from us, but who meant so much to us during life that their influence and power for good cannot be measured. Our character has been enriched and mellowed by knowing them and fellowshipping with them through the years, and their memory abides with us like the benediction that follows after prayer.

3. *Hope*. This is the Christian's golden key by which beautiful memories are turned into alluring dreams of hope. In all our desolations in this vale of tears, hope is an anchor of the soul. It steadies us in the storms of life;

it cheers us like the beams from some friendly lighthouse; it enables us to see life in the light of the eternal years. When all else is taken from us, God be praised for hope!

4. *Time.* This is indeed a healing ministry, one of the best doctors in the universe. The poet sings that "Time brings roses." The road bed of the new railway cuts a great red gash in the green landscape; it is bald, bare and ugly—but soon it will be covered with ferns and grass and flowers, and the gash is healed. So the deepest wounds in our hearts are closed by nature's restorative processes. When the desolating bereavement comes a man is likely to cry out: "I shall never laugh again!" O yes, you will; time, God's great restorer, ministers to the broken spirit and after a while smiles come back to the blanched cheek. This is a beautiful assurance of the Word: "God will wipe away all tears from your eyes." It is simply marvellous what time can do in restoring joy to a heart that seemed to be breaking.

5. *Activity* is a branch in this tree of heavenly consolation. It has sweetened many an experience embittered by idleness. The worst thing you can do in sorrow is to sit down and mope over it. It is fortunate at such an hour to have much to do. Goethe's mother said of him: "My son, when he has a grief, puts it into a poem, and so gets rid of it." We cannot all put our sorrows into poems, but we can all engage in some form of work; and when we get busy in weeding our garden, we shall find that in doing it we will also extract weeds from our own minds and hearts. Don't rob yourself of this means of grace. St. Paul was afraid of indolent Christians, who gave up their daily tasks and waited passively for the Lord's return. Idleness is the devil's workshop.

6. *Service.* The best way to gain new inspiration is to forget yourself in the service of others. This is the grandest transfiguring and transforming power in life. What a new color our heartaches take when we get busy in ministries of unselfishness! If we dress a neighbor's wound, the rawness will go out of our own. Just a word of cheer to a lonely heart, just an outstretched hand of helpfulness to a sufferer—this will operate as a cooling balm to our feverish pain. "When I felt as though my heart would break," said one of nature's noblemen, "I went out to help a poor soul in desperate need; and then, for me, the bitter waters became sweet." The real reason some folks never get over their bereavements is because they would not give themselves up to some unselfish service in behalf of others. They miss the gracious opiate which deadens the sense of one's own sorrows and makes it possible to endure nobly the "stings and arrows of outrageous fortune." When John Bright was sinking into hopelessness beneath the weight of a crushing sorrow, Richard Cobden came with a trumpet call to rouse him out of his selfish grief for a crusade in behalf of the sick and poor. When he answered this challenge with gallantry and courage the sun began to shine again in his own heart.

All these branches of the tree of heavenly consolation are indeed angels of God sent out by a loving Father to serve us when our hearts are breaking, to sweeten the bitter waters of Marah in every Christian life.

MID-WEEK SERMON

THEME: ***The Duty of Joy.***

TEXT: Nehemiah 8:10.

In 450 B.C. two men faced the task of rebuilding a nation. Had built the walls of Jerusalem. Now must build the nation. First step, bringing the people back to a consciousness of God. Bible had been lost. Found in clearing the ruins of the Temple.

The Duty of Joy: Bible read in public square. People realized how far they had drifted from God. Depressed. Called to joy. Nehemiah so filled the people with his own glad assurance of a God who meant joy and gladness that "there was very great gladness." Some afraid of emotional religion. Yet religion is a matter of the emotions. Not an easy-going, so-called optimism, that neglects facts until disaster overtakes. A facing of life and its realities with certain deep and unshakable convictions. This joy had sure and strong foundations and these foundations stand to this day.

They Shared A Task With God: They had rebuilt the walls of the city of God. It was God's people whose destinies they were shaping. They were rebuilding the Commonwealth of God. So it is our task to make America God's Country indeed.

The Task Rekindled Hope: Give a man something worth doing, and if there is any worth in the man the task will make him worthier. The Captivity had wellnigh killed hope in the Jew. He had been depressed by the dangers of the Return. Now he found joy in a great task and hope was rekindled. Give self to big things, big thoughts and big efforts and minor irritants are swept aside.

In Task and Hope God Was Rediscovered: Gloom and depression lay in the fact that they had lost touch with God. Have you ever seen a joyous infidel? They found God in the Bible. The great tragedy of our day is the non-use of the Book by Christian people. Much of the pessimism of our day may be traced to this. The thing that filled Jerusalem with joy was the rediscovery of God. Neglect none of the agencies of God's revelation, but most of all seek him in his Word. There you will find him in Christ Jesus.

TOPICS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE'S SOCIETIES

CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR: Y. P.—May Topic, Religion in Music and Verse. An Evening with Religious Poetry. Psa. 107:1-8.
Jr.—May Topic, Cooperation—Why did God Put us in Families. Deut. 4:9-10.
LUTHER LEAGUE: Sr.—Life Service Day. Acts 9:3-6.
Y. P.—Same.
Inter.—Same.
WALTHER LEAGUE: May Topic, Your Talents. Motives. Talents Given by God.

MAY, SECOND SUNDAY

CALL TO WORSHIP: "Lo, I am come to do Thy will, O God."
PSALM: 111.
PRELUDE: Meditation—*Hollins.*
ANTHEM: Blessed Be the Name of the Lord—*Greene.*
OFFERTORY: Chant du Soir—*Hackett.*
POSTLUDE: Proclamation March—*Lacey.*
OFFERTORY SENTENCE: "The Lord is at hand. In nothing be anxious; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God."
OFFERTORY PRAYER: We bring these gifts to Thee in love and gladness, not to fulfill a command, but to glorify Thy Name. Look into our hearts and see there a reflection of Thy love for Thy children. Pray, keep us steadfast in Thy love.
BENEDICTION: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

SERMONS

THEME: ***Roll Call of the Generations.***

HUGH THOMSON KERR, D. D.

TEXT: "He did that which was right in the sight of the Lord." II Chron. 26:4.
HYMNS: "Blest are the Pure in Heart."—*Franconia, S. M.*
"O Light, Whose Beams Illumine All."—*St. Justin.*

One of the best tonics for a time like this is a good dose of history. It doesn't matter very much what the history is. Any history will do the work. The story of history will steady the nerves in these days of unrest and disquiet and will give relief from the impasse to which we have come in our political thinking, our economics and our Utopian philosophy. History is sane, objective, impersonal and passes judgment, as Emerson has said, in favor of the centuries as against the passing hours. Especially is this true of the reading of Old Testament history. There we find the past simplified and reduced to a few final fundamental principles. There we find life as confused and bewildered as it ever has been. The history of the Old Testament is one long jumble of conflict, civil and foreign wars, rivalries in religion, intrigues in politics; but when the story is written down its interpretation is plain. There is nothing complicated. A hundred years are condensed into a dozen verses and life is interpreted in terms of moral judgment.

You can test this simplicity of interpretation for yourself. Take a few chapters of the historical books and trace the coming and going of the generations of kings and queens and princes, of priests and prophets; and you will find repeated, as a judgment, the refrain "He did that which was right in the sight of the Lord"; or the opposite, "He did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord." That is all. That is the key to the march of time. Sometimes there is the repetition of another note. "His mother's name was Jecoliah." "His mother's name was Jerushah." The writers seem to feel that the mothers of men mean a great deal in the fashioning of national destiny. She was not visibly shaping national policies but she was influencing the spirit of her son, and in shaping the future years had a large part. In all this interpretation of history there is nothing surprising nor unusual. Everything works itself out naturally and normally. "He did that which was right in the sight of the Lord" and therefore the Lord was on his side. It worked

that way. There is no escaping the nexus of events. If you begin with the Lord you end with the Lord.

Suppose we look at a particular section of this history. We will choose three short chapters in the Second Book of Chronicles where we have the spotlight turned upon one hundred years of Hebrew history. We are introduced to a series of generations. We have the story of a father, a son and a grandson. They succeeded each other as kings of Israel. The first reigned fifty-two years, the second sixteen, and the third sixteen. Their names are familiar —Uzziah, Jotham and Ahaz—and the greatest of the three is Uzziah.

Uzziah became king when he was sixteen years old and for fifty-two years he led his nation from glory to glory. He was possessed with a dominant religious passion and his first act was to restore the temple services. Later he enlarged the boundaries of the nation, strengthened the defences, created a new and unfailing water supply, developed agriculture, spread the fame of his country beyond Egypt, until it was written of him that "he was marvellously helped." And of course that means that God was his helper. Before you have gotten really started in the story of his life you come upon the statement, "He did that which was right in the sight of the Lord." That was his secret. That is all the historian cares to say about this mighty man, and it is enough. The important thing to know about any man is whether he is doing that which is right in the sight of the Lord. If so, then time is on his side.

Uzziah was succeeded by his son Jotham. Jotham began to reign when he was twenty-five and he reigned sixteen years. The fine record of his father is repeated in the son. Credit is given, too, to his mother Jerushah, the daughter of Zadok the priest. It is written of him, as of his father, "He did that which was right in the sight of the Lord." The record is quite good, quite worthy. He had not the driving personality of his father and had not his passionate religious interest, but everything is quite good and satisfactory.

There is, however, one strange note in the story. We read these arresting words about Jotham, "He entered not into the temple of the Lord." No reason is given for his conduct. Perhaps his father had been too much interested and over-zealous; and indeed punishment was meted out to his father in his old age for his excessive religious zeal. Perhaps he had had enough of preaching and psalm-singing in his early life to last him all his days. We have all known men who have talked that way. Some of them, too, have been justified. The interesting and arresting and thought-provoking thing about it is that he got along very well without it and is praised by the historian for doing what was right. That, of course, is quite easy to understand. This city is full of just such men and women. You meet them every day in business and in social life. You go behind their indifference and their non-attendance on the church and you find that there is always an early church inheritance. This man in an important position used to teach in the Sunday School, sing in the choir, and now he never attends a church service. And he gets along so well that people who make church sacrifices often wonder.

Well, it is all very easy to understand. There is a word in mechanics which we call momentum. We watch a great throbbing locomotive take a train of

cars and transfer to them the impulse of its own power so that when separated from the engine the cars will speed along the rails with apparent purpose. There are plenty of men who are still moving under the momentum of just such a shunting experience which has been inherited from their parents. They are still religious. They feel at home in a religious atmosphere. Their friends are churchmen. They are interested in the best things in the community. They salute the church, but they do not enter it. They get along very well on an inherited religion. They have enough of momentum from the original impulse of their life to carry them along down into the future. They may get along all right. Perhaps!

But what about the next generation? Jotham gets along on the momentum of his father's faith, but what about Jotham's son? How does he come out? This young fellow Ahaz, who began to reign when he was twenty, how does he get along? Can the religious momentum which was inherited from his father, move the grandson along the father's high course? No, the momentum fades out in the third generation and Ahaz comes to a dead end. The record is reversed. We read the simple story in a clear statement, "He did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord." He not only did not enter the church of his fathers but he turned against it. Here is the record, "This is that king Ahaz. For he sacrificed unto the gods of Damascus, which smote him: and he said, Because the gods of the kings of Syria help them, therefore will I sacrifice to them, that they may help me. But they were the ruin of him, and of all Israel. And Ahaz gathered together the vessels of the house of God, and cut in pieces the vessels of the house of God, and shut up the doors of the house of the Lord.

Now the principle which I am presenting is just this. You can sustain the old virtues and the old moralities for a generation, even if religion and the church are neglected. There is enough momentum to carry the old moralities on but when the original religious impulse begins to fade out the moralities also begin to disappear. The point does not need to be argued. History amply justifies it. We are apt to see history repeat itself here in America. The present generation are the children of God-fearing, church-going stock. They are carrying on quite well. They believe in the old-fashioned ideals; but when the new generation comes forward, whose parents had no church loyalties and who inherited no religious driving dynamic, there will be a loosening of the bonds that bind men to those virtues which are the fruit of faith. You can even now see certain symptoms in our own community. Under government agencies great new housing projects have been established, creating new communities; but in these housing projects, while there is provision for all mechanical devices making available all modern improvements which should be made available in moderately priced homes, there is no provision anywhere made for a church in the area of those new housing projects and no property is available for purchase or for rent where a House of God may be established. In his farewell address to the nation, back in 1796, George Washington made mention of this very situation. "Let us," he said, "with caution indulge the supposition that morality can be maintained without religion."

It is the glory of the people of God that religion is the golden chain that

binds the generations into a unity of life and purpose. Down through the centuries our song is "One generation shall praise thy works to another, and shall declare thy mighty acts." It is all very simple. The great law of religious education is still unchanged, "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord: and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and will all thy might. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up." It is all very simple and it is all very timeless. After all, things are not as bewildering as they seem. The laws of life are simple and the secret of continuity is well known. We will make no new discovery in this realm. Professor William James said towards the end of his life, "I am done with great things, big things, with great institutions and big successes, and I am for those tiny molecular forces that work from individual to individual." That is the secret. From individual to individual. From generation to generation. "One generation shall praise thy name to another, and shall declare thy mighty acts." The secret of success in this life and of joy in the life everlasting is this simple formula, "He did that which was right in the sight of the Lord."

Fourth Sunday After Easter (Cantate).

THEME: ***A Mother's Petition.***

GORDON W. MATTICE, D. D.

TEXT: "Then came to Jesus the Mother of Zebedee's children with her sons, worshiping him, and desiring a certain thing of him. And He said unto her, what wilt thou? She saith unto him, Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on the left in thy kingdom." Matt. 20:20-21.

HYMNS: "O For A Closer Walk with God."—*Balerma, C. M.*
"Dear Lord And Father Of Mankind."—*Elton,* 8, 6, 8, 8, 6.

James and John were two of the fine disciples of Jesus. They were ambitious young men, and believing that Jesus was the Messiah and that He was coming into His kingdom, they desired to be sure of places of leadership, so they did what many a young man has done—they got their Mother to go to Jesus and ask that they might be given preference when He made His selection.

This incident has frequently been used as an illustration of a mother's ambition for her children. In this she is surely a symbol of all mothers. By inference, we know much about her. She bore and reared two sons who from infancy grew into a splendid manhood, and who were deemed fit material for Jesus to choose as intimate companions. This fact implies a host of things about the home life and the training of those boys, for their mother would be the one person most responsible for that. We know also that like every mother, she was deeply concerned about her sons and that she was ambitious for their future. They meant more to her than anything else in the world.

And so it is perfectly natural that it should be her petition that they be

given places of prominence in the Kingdom she believed coming. She asked nothing for herself. We may be sure that she would gladly have met any demands that might have been made upon her to fulfill her hopes for them. She was used to giving up her own comforts and satisfactions for her sons. Sacrifice on her part in their behalf could have been no novelty for her. This request of hers was the most natural thing in the world. We may say also that she had earned the right to make such a petition.

There is a question that comes as we consider this matter. It is whether her sons deserved to have her ask it for them. When we look carefully into the answer of Jesus, we see that He was getting at this. We can easily picture the scene. Jesus surely smiled upon this mother with genuine understanding, as He saw this evidence of her loyalty and her ambition for her children. Without a doubt He honored her for making this request. He knew her sons well. But this question is one that we do well to ponder—had these sons learned to be worthy of self-forgetful love? She had poured out her life for them in a love which demanded nothing in return. Had they caught that? Were they, in turn, prepared to give themselves without reserve to the service of others? That is the question which mattered most about these two sons of a devoted mother—and that is the crucial question which faces us on this Mother's Day.

It is very easy to lose sight of the primary issue here. The very idea of Mother's Day is bound to suggest to each of us the fact that we owe a great debt. Remembering what we have said about this mother, we know full well that our own mothers have paid a similar price for us. But it is not enough to admit that we owe a debt; we must go on to a realistic answer to the question as to how that debt shall be paid.

As we look at this honestly, we recognize that we are seriously tempted to pay it with counterfeit currency. There is an economic axiom to the effect that cheap money drives out that which is good. Dwight Smith in a magazine article says that the reason why responsible economists are forever warning against inflation is because they know how often it has happened that when a nation once yields to the temptation to issue cheap money, the result has been disaster. Any business man knows that the same thing is true also of goods. Flood the market with cheap, inferior articles, and the goods of quality gather dust on the shelves. It happens in the case of intangible goods also. The never-ending task of those who feel concern for high literary standards, for example, is to try to combat the appalling dead weight of cheap, shoddy reading matter. One of the most dis-heartening things in the experience of those who try to maintain high standards in any field, be it in music, religion, morals or entertainment, is to see the ease with which the shabby, silly and vulgar imitations of the real thing gain a foothold. Whether the coin to which we refer is the coin of the realm or the coin of the spirit, it remains true that what is cheap always threatens the very survival of that which is most worthwhile.

See how true this is in the specific case of Mother's Day. The fact that we so generally honor the day at all is evidence of the fact that we feel a need for it. But what a travesty we are in danger of making it. We have been lured into the idea that we can pay the day off so casually. There comes now and then a really fine expression of what we ought to feel about motherhood, but so much of it is mawkish sentimentality. Yet how much of it is put into circulation on this day.

No, my friends, the cheap coin of sentimentality won't do. It is sheer

counterfeit; and our debts cannot be paid in that coin. We agree that we ought to prove ourselves worthy of the price our mothers have paid; very well, then, let us face that fact that there is only one way to go about that.

That we should give visible, audible evidence of appreciation is most important. But that is only the beginning. If we mean what we say, it becomes our inescapable obligation to see that our lives in some measure justify the price mother has paid. In the last analysis it will be done not by our just doing some thing, but by being some thing. It is up to us to see to it that from this day on we shall be more nearly the fine people and noble characters that our mothers have hoped, dreamed and prayed that we might be.

We face this morning a very sorely stricken world. We cannot help but believe that if the mothers of the world had had some say in the trend of the affairs of the world, the outcome would have been different. In their behalf, and in behalf of their sons and daughters who are dying, we must put a stop to this suicidal madness in our world. To be devoted to peace is one way we can truly honor the Mothers of the race.

Thinking again of this incident in the Gospel, we find that the mother of these two boys wished that her sons might be at the right and left hand of Jesus. She could not have asked anything finer for her children. She loved her sons, believing in them, and dared to hope that they might deserve to occupy positions of trust and honor in the Kingdom of God. She did not make the mistake of supposing that wealth or possessions would be the thing to ask for them. The one thing her heart craved for her sons was that they might always be close by the side of Christ and to be working for and with them.

Here is the crowning proof that the mother of Zebedee's children was typical of all mothers at their best. For is this not supremely the things that your own mother has wished for you? Of course she has hoped that you might be happy, that you would be surrounded with at least a measure of worldly satisfactions, but all through her desire for you runs that one, unfailing petition that you would always be close to Jesus. Beside that, all others prayers would be incidental. Let your outward circumstances be what they may, the matter of supreme importance to her is that you should always be close to Him. I know that I speak for every mother here when I say that. And I say to every son and daughter that unless we help to fulfill this mother's petition we are not true to the best that is in us.

As Jesus answered this mother, He asked if they could be worthy of the petition she made in their behalf. And He asks the same thing of each of us today. This is what we need to face in our own souls, as we remember a Mother's Petition.

". . . Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? They say unto Him, We are able."

May God help each of us to answer that.

"Art you able," said the Master,
"To be crucified with Me?"
"Yea," the sturdy dreamers answered,
"To the death we follow Thee."
Lord, we are able,
Our spirits are Thine,
Remold them, make us,
Like Thee, divine.
Thy guiding radiance,
Above us shall be
A beacon to God,
To love and loyalty."

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

The Responsibility of the Home Regarding Beverage Alcohol.

LESSON: Deut. 6:4-7; Jer. 35:5-10.

GOLDEN TEXT: "Train up a child in the way he should go. And even when he is old he will not depart from it." Prov. 22:6.

DEVOTIONAL READING: Psalm 78:1-7.

INTER. & SR. TOPIC: What the Family Can Do about Beverage Alcohol.

Y. P. & ADULTS: The Home and the Problem of Beverage Alcohol.

One of the most serious of the many tragic conditions confronting us today, in the matter of temperance education and reform, lies in the fact that more and more women are becoming addicted to drink. In the hands of women, wives and mothers in the home, lie the responsibilities of child training. The earliest lessons of purity and rectitude of life are learned in the home. At the present time there are more young women serving bar in the United States than there are enrolled in the colleges and universities of the land. This condition spells disaster for the future generation. Lessons learned in youth are not forgotten.

The sons of the House of the Rechabites were enabled to resist the temptations set before them because of the training which they had received in their father's house. So strong was the training of these young men in our lesson that they quietly and politely declined to violate the ideals they had learned in their father's house. (*Give modern illustrations.*)

EVENING SERMON

THEME: *A Godly Mother.*

WILLIAM S. BOWDEN, D. D.

TEXT: "For this child I prayed; and the Lord hath given me my petition which I asked of Him. Therefore also I have lent him to the Lord, as long as he liveth he shall be lent to the Lord." I Samuel 1:27-28.

HYMNS: "Take My Life and Let It Be."—*Hendon,* 7s.
"Oh Holy Lord, Content To Fill."—*Abends, L. M.*

When we think of Samuel we are forced to think of his mother. The influence of godly Hannah is seen in his life. The influence of a godly mother is beyond estimate.

The story of Hannah reveals some of the things which make the influence of a mother very great for good.

1. *Prayer.*

Samuel had a praying mother. His very name means "Asked of the Lord." "My mother's prayers haunt me like a ghost," said a conscience-stricken sailor one night, after doing wrong. "I knew that my mother would be praying for me," said one who became a famous American bishop, "I knew that my mother would be praying for me, and it helped me." I wonder if Samuel was not often strengthened by the thought that his mother was praying for him. Rev. J. H. Ainsworth has well said: "A mother's prayer is a thought of love passing up to the universal heart of God, and then returning, enriched with God's own blessing, sent on its way to the particular soul from whom the prayer was made."

Augustine spent his youth in vanity and wantonness. His godly mother continued to pray and to trust. One day Augustine read these words written by the great apostle Paul, "Not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying: but put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof." He was convicted and converted. The prayers of his godly mother were answered. Monica prayed not in vain. The child of her prayers became one of the greatest Christian leaders. Many examples could be given of the holy influence of a praying mother. Mothers, don't stop praying.

The recorded prayer of Samuel, First Samuel 1:11, was brief; it was offered when she was in trouble. Her prayer was secret. "She spake in her heart; only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard." The fact of her making a vow indicates that she had faith that her prayer would be answered. A study of her prayer is worthwhile.

2. *A Mother's Dedication.*

"And she vowed a vow." If more mothers would dedicate their children to the Lord it would make unnecessary many efforts to redeem wasted lives in after years. G. Campbell Morgan testifies that he owes his Christian life to the dedication of his mother. "You will ask, 'When and where was your conversion?' I do not know. I have never been able to date it. I cannot tell you where it was. I am perfectly sure that sometime in those years, to what my parents told me of my relation to God, I said, 'Amen'; that at some time my heart and will responded, without knowing it, to the claim set upon me by my loved ones; and I know that at that moment the will of the child said, 'yes' to the will of the King, and the King took the child into his kingdom, and the child was born again. I say that without hesitation. I say it for the encouragement of others who may not be able to find a date when they were converted! but I say this is to you also: 'Be very, very careful that you are converted!' If you put the question back on me tonight, 'How do you know you are born again?' I do not know I am born again by any experience of thirty years ago, but by the present throbbing of God in my life, His Spirit bearing witness with my spirit here and now. I am His and none can deny me the witness of His Spirit."

Matthew Simpson was a shining light for his Lord. When he told his

widowed mother that he felt called to preach, she exclaimed amid tears of joy: "Oh, my son, I have prayed for this hour every day since you were born. At that time, we dedicated you to the Christian ministry." Mothers, live consecrated lives; dedicate your children to the Lord.

3. *Love.*

Hannah loved her son; she also loved God. Because of her supreme love to God she gave her son over to the service of God as long as he might live. She made a great sacrifice by devoting her son to the service of God. True love to God counts no sacrifice too great. The love of a godly mother is wonderful. Mother-love is always worthy of notice. But the unselfish love of the mother who gives God first place in her life is most remarkable.

> "Her love outlasts all other human love,
> Her faith endures the longest, hardest test,
> Her grace and patience through a lifetime prove
> That she's a friend, the noblest and the best."

Who can estimate the influence of one pious mother? Bishop Hall, Matthew Henry, Payson, Doddridge, the Wesleys, and many other bright stars in the work of the Lord have confessed the power of a mother's influence. John Newton learned to pray at his mother's knee. Her influence in his life was so great when he faced dangers at sea in after life, he prayed in agony, "My Mother's God, Thou God of Mercy, have mercy on me!" Newton gladly confessed the influence of his mother in his life. It was through Newton that Thomas Scott, the commentator, was led to Christ. Wilberforce, also, the champion of the freedom of the slave, was won to Christ through him. Wilberforce's work, "A Practical View of Christianity," brought Leigh Richmond into the work of the ministry.

Over a generation ago a young school-teacher named Martha Campbell had her heart fired with love for a lost world and zeal for Christ's last command. She was not permitted to go to the foreign field, but when she became a mother everyone of her children was consecrated to the Lord. That humble woman is the mother of Wilbert W. White, who founded the Bible Teachers' Training School in New York, and editor of the *Bible Magazine;* of J. Campbell White, who largely organized the Layman's Missionary Movement and was its first General Secretary; of Mrs. John R. Mott, whose husband has been one of the best known figures in the missionary world, the president of the World's Missionary Conference at Edinburgh; of Mrs. W. R. Stewart, whose husband is a missionary in China; while the eldest daughter is married to a minister who was for many years a missionary in frontier service in the Great Northwest."

Time would fail us for telling of all the men we know or know about who acknowledge that their mother's influence in their early lives did more than anything else to shape their lives. Childhood is the best time for exerting such influence. Hannah was industrious and intelligent. Among a number of good things which might be said about her we'll mention but one more.

Her Reward! Hannah gave away one child, and God paid her back with five. Then she was rewarded in Samuel himself. Some years ago I read a statement by the Rev. T. DeWitt Talmage to this effect: "For all the coats

Hannah made for Samuel; for all the prayers she offered for him; for the discipline she exerted over him, she got abundant compensation in the piety, and the usefulness, and the popularity of her son Samuel; and that is true in all ages." Many a mother has found her reward in the great career of a son. As sons and daughters may we honor our mothers!

"The greatest battle that ever was fought—
Shall I tell you where and when?
On the maps of the world you will find it not:
It was fought by the mothers of men."

MID-WEEK SERMON

THEME: ***The Conquering Ideal.***

TEXT: Proverbs 1:8.

Biographies note the influences that bore on the life portrayed and the ideals that motivated it. The ideals were not mere 'pipe-dreams.' They were the most powerful realities in the universe. History from one angle, is the story of the development and realization of ideals.

The Conquering Ideal: Ideal of Democracy. Why did not the rule of the feudal lords continue? Why do we view with alarm and distrust the rise and power of the dictators? Because they are a 'throw-back' to Runymede and Yorktown. Because our ideal, the ideal that has made America, is "Government of—for—by the people." Ideal of Manhood. Greece and Rome were slave economies and in that fact we find the causes of their downfall. Negro slavery in the U. S. A. brought on Civil War. Democracy rests on the ideal of the equality of the individual before God and among his fellows.

The Ideal of the Mother: "When God wants an important thing done in this world, or a wrong righted, he goes about it in a very singular way. He does not release his thunderbolts or stir up his earthquakes. He simply has a tiny, helpless babe born, perhaps in a very obscure home, perhaps of a very humble mother. Then he puts the idea or purpose into the mother's heart, she puts it into the baby's mind and then—God waits!"—E. T. Sullivan. Of course, we are speaking of good mothers. Every memorial to a good mother is a recognition of the genuine worth of the ideals of the mother.

Hold to the Ideal: Ideals need to be renewed by each oncoming generation. Danger of decay lies in a generation lacking in high ideals. A generation growing old may find its ideals growing dim. We need godly mothers to perpetuate them in the hearts and minds of babies.

TOPICS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE'S SOCIETIES

CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR: Y. P.—Religion and Verse. An Evening of Religious Music. Psalm 100.
Jr.—Cooperation. Living Together. Acts 4:32-35.
LUTHER LEAGUE: Sr.—Mother's Day. Exodus 20:12.
Y. P.—Same.
Inter.—Mothers. Luke 2:41-52.
WALTHER LEAGUE: May Topic. Talents—Given to all. Given in Varying Measure.

MAY, THIRD SUNDAY

CALL TO WORSHIP: "He that is mighty hath done to me great things; and holy is His name."
PSALM: 110.
PRELUDE: Consolation—*Mendelssohn.*
ANTHEM: The King of Love—*Protheroe.*
OFFERTORY: Alla Breve—*Rheinberger.*
POSTLUDE: Finale in B Flat—*Maxson.*
OFFERTORY SENTENCE: "Withhold not good from them to whom it is due, when it is within the power of thy hand to do it."
OFFERTORY PRAYER: We need Thy guidance in our petitions for strength, because we can accomplish nothing of ourselves. Warm our hearts with Thy divine love, so we may feel assured that our works are acceptable to Thee. Teach us to pray, so that Thy grace may shine forth as witness to Thy goodness. We beseech Thee to grant our prayers and use our gifts in making Thy name known to all mankind. Amen.
BENEDICTION: "This is the end of the matter; all hath been heard: Fear God, and keep His commandments; for this is the whole duty of man." "The grace of the Lord be with thy spirit."

SERMONS

THEME: *How Old Are You?*

J. STANLEY DURKEE, D. D.

HYMNS: "Feeble, Helpless, How shall I."—*Vienna,* 77, 77.
"Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah."—*Pilgrim,* 87, 87, 47.

I am asking you to turn to the ninetieth Psalm and a portion of the ninth verse as a basis for our thought of the morning. "We bring our years to an end as a tale or a story that is told."

An author may spend two long years at work on his book, the arrangement of his material, the creating of his characters, and at last with joy the book is published. I sit down when the day is done, and before I retire for the night, I have read this entire work of two hard years. A traveller comes to speak to us of his wanderings up and down the world. Twenty-five years has he spent in the out places of the world getting his facts and fancies, and in the lecture of two hours I have covered his twenty-five years. A composer hearing those songs and feeling those strange emotions, who through long days of labor and nights devoid of ease, has felt in his soul those melodies, at last captures them and writes them in form. I sit while our choir or orchestra in fifteen minutes shall give me the strains of more than fifteen years. "We bring our years to an end as a story that is told."

But we are incurably romantic. We are everyone of us lovers of romance. "In the spring the young man's fancy," cries Tennyson, "lightly turns to thoughts of love," and we who get a bit jaded, are trying to get back into the romance of life. Youth, middle aged, and age are trying to renew that something which is fundamental in our being. Our life, therefore, becomes a story. The outline of your lives is written down for the benefit of others. Your struggles, your hand to hand encounters with self and forces seemingly too great for you; your slow and steady climb up the hill from poverty to affluence, from ignorance to education, from childhood of no preparation, until some of you stand on the high lands where the others begin to look at you and cheer you because of your ability and power. What a story! What a story is human life, and how long will that story be?

Many years ago authors poured out their sentences to a thousand or

more pages, and then the modern writers began to decrease the story so that two hundred pages were enough, until one modern novelist took the dare and put twelve hundred pages in his book. Since then we have been cursed with such long books filled and padded with so much of useless chatter. What a story! Alfred Tennyson in his great poem "In Memoriam" was thinking of that story and in four brief stanzas he gives us the history of life.

"Dost thou look back on what hath been,
As some divinely gifted man,
Whose life in low estate began
And on a simple village green;

Who breaks his birth's invidious bar,
And grasps the skirts of happy chance,
And breasts the blows of circumstance,
And grapples with his evil star;

Who makes by force his merit known,
And lives to clutch the golden keys,
To mould a mighty state's decrees,
And shape the whisper of the throne;

And moving up from high to higher,
Becomes on Fortune's crowning slope,
The pillar of a people's hope,
The center of a world's desire;—"

What a story is this story of human life with all its recorded and unrecorded trials, advantages, achievements and defeats. I want to think within those limitations with you this morning as we dig out some of the truth evoked by the question, "How old are you?" How long and how worth while is your story of life? How quickly it is gone—

"So fades a summer cloud away;
So sinks the gale when storms are o'er;
So gently shuts the eye of day;
So dies a wave along the shore."

Will you note first the synthesis of the years. We are told that a child has 350 bony substances which it shall shape into its physical life, but a man of forty years has only 206. The years have been synthesizing even the bones in the body of the child and the youth, so that when the body is ready to take the full load and responsibility of life, every bone supports every other and a synthetic body has been produced by nature. Nature does that for us and whether we will or no, nature will build us to the highest state of perfection physically. But then comes the matter of mental synthesis that shall do for the mind and soul of men what nature does for his body. That great responsibility is left to us. The brain of the child is as the white tablet, untouched. As the years go by, impressions first, habits second, and then the influence of others begins to write on that brain what it shall be, or what it may produce in the years to come.

We may make of ourselves whatever we will. I want you, lest you forget this great truth, to remember that our thoughts determine our circumstances. That will give us a long anxious day of good thinking. I repeat, it is our thoughts that determine our circumstances in life and not our circumstances

that determine our thoughts. We make of our world what we will, and we do it by the thoughts which we entertain, by the thoughts we cultivate, by the enthusiasm we put behind our living for the things greatest and truest. Now amid all the changes of life, there is a certain constant something that remains. I went back to my old home and stood by the old house last summer where as children we played and laughed, and sang when the hours of prayer came. None of them were there. The house was used by strangers, and I, a man of these ripe years standing by the old home door, the same person, yes, but different. There is a something that holds from the experiences of the past. It is the entropy that saves our continuity.

Youth is eternal. The experience of youth is a very wonderful experience. Blessed be these boys and girls who understand it and take it with all its sweetness, all its honesty, all its purity, all its joy, and build out of it that something that does abide forever. We should be very careful that we never lose our youth.

Ponce de Leon starting out to discover the spring of eternal youth found it the moment he made the start; for the spring of eternal youth is always in that brain and soul that is seeking new experiences. A man is never old, a woman is never old who is constantly seeking and finding new experiences that enlarge the brain, enlarge the soul, enlarge the scope of world living. A man or a woman is old the moment either of them cease to contact with the wider experiences of the greater life that is about them. Youth is eternal in that always youth is coming up. Coming up to take the place of those who have been before them pushing off the generation before, that they might have the right of way, only to be crowded out by the youth who come on. "One generation shall praise Thy works to another and shall declare Thy mighty acts." Youth, eternal youth.

Now a third question is, "How old is old?" Fourteen of the leading old men of the world were asked some years ago to give an answer. They asked Mr. Gladstone who had fought a most trying political battle, and at eighty-three years of age was the Premier of England for the third time! "Mr. Gladstone, how old is old?" He said, "Gentlemen, we are always as young as our impulses to discover new experiences." They asked Mr. Edward Markham, who has just slipped away, our own great American poet, "How old is old?" "Pay no attention to it whatever; we are never old so long as we have a job and enthusiasm to accomplish."

The moment one loses the impulses of youth that moment one is old, and only at that moment. Lord Bacon said, "Young men and women are fitter to create than to judge. Fitter to initiate than to counsel; fitter to reach after, than to come into old and established business and be a success." He added, "old age fears too much, gives way to ease, forgets too soon, repents too quickly."

Bacon was right. Now every one of us may line ourselves up by those statements and write down our age whether twenty or one hundred according to the impulses and enthusiasm with which we are contacting life. It were well for us if we all should take an inventory on a standard such as this. Did I have my life to live over again, would I live it as I have lived it? If I had mine to live over again with opportunity to be a minister I would cry with ten thousand desires, yes! give me that above everything else. There are many men who have never been blessed with a life-long goal that was mine, but I say you can have it if you pay the price for it and then you shall know the joy of being forever young because you are contacting day by day with the new, the beautiful, the true. That is taking possession of your life. If I had my life to live

over, would I live it in honesty, purity, in sacrifices and inspiration to those around me, or would I surrender to selfishness always reaching for that something which might give more to me? Would I settle down as the years go by while those visible pencil marks on my face show that I am out of step with God and with the experiences of the world?

May I say to you that we shall never be old as long as we keep our faith in God and in ourselves. We shall never be old so long as we can confidently put our hand in the hand of God and say, "lead Thou me on till the night is gone." There is something about an absolute faith in God which keeps men and women young. The years have no power whatever over the heart that constantly lives in the faith and in the presence of God Himself.

How old are you? If you think you are a bit too old today, awaken that presence that brings back youth, not in years, physical years, but in riper wisdom, in finer judgment, in more mental experiences of all that life has for us.

Mr. Taft, our great American sculptor, worked for long years in the effort of lighting statues especially of Donatello's Boy, St. John. He found that if he lighted it from the bottom the face was distorted and that beautiful child became like an imp, a fiend, and he drew back in horror to look on that child's face. Then he lighted the face from above, and all the glory and beauty and wonder of the Master's craft came out and the child seemed to climb out of the marble and stand before him to speak.

Men and women, get your light for life from above and not from beneath or on the surface. Get your inspiration from God and your faith in Him, then let the years roll on. They have no meaning save that they pass us on from childhood and youth and manhood to what we call age. But what we really shall learn to write is the joy of the new morning of eternal youth which breaks before us, that we can always say with Robert Browning,

"Grow old along with me!
The best is yet to be,
. . . . .
So, take and use Thy work
Amend what flaws may lurk,
What strain o' the stuff,
What warpings past the aim!
My times be in Thy hand!
Perfect the cup as planned!
Let age approve of youth,
And death complete the same!"

We bring our years to a close as a story that is told. Will it be worth while reading when you have laid down your pen, the heart has ceased beating and you are no more of this life?

Fifth Sunday After Easter (Rogata).

THEME: *Thinking the Way God Thinks.*

HUGH THOMSON KERR, D. D.

TEXT: "My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord." Isa. 55:8.

HYMNS: "Thy way not mine, O Lord."—*Ibstone,* 66, 66.
"O God of Jacob, By Whose Hand."—*St. Peter, C. M.*

If we go to this marvellous passage in Isaiah, out of which we have taken these haunting words, it may point the way for us to discover something

more specific about God's thinking. In this extraordinary uplifting inspiring evangelical chapter we will find God's mind revealed as to His thinking and His purpose.

We Americans in the twentieth century, are confused, bewildered, and God is speaking to us in the present. Can we know the thoughts of God about the present situation in which we find ourselves? Can we know the thought of God about this tragic war which has turned the course of history out of its channel? The other day a magazine printed an editorial criticizing or rather condemning the clergy for not being definite and specific in their preaching about war. They should tell people what is the right and wrong about the present situation. They should preach absolutes; absolute values, absolute virtues. They should listen to what God says to them in the silence and report it in public. Well, what does God think about the war? Does God think war? No. Does He will peace? To many that is an obvious truth and yet in the House of Lords in England the Bishop of Birmingham, when he heard the story of the strangling of Germany by the blockade, rose to ask if it were not the duty of the Allies to obey the command, "If thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat." And the Archbishop of Canterbury said "No." What does God think? In a recent book by Nathaniel Micklem, Principal of Mansfield College, Oxford, entitled *May God Defend the Right,* he says, "We see even in this war the will of God—not merely his will that in the circumstances we should enter upon it but, more deeply and generally, his will in that a civilization so godless, so secular, so merciless, so unbrotherly as ours must in God's moral order lead to disaster in the end. We recognize the judgment of God upon ourselves as well as on our enemies." War then is God's judgment upon human sin. Then there are the views of Dr. Lindsay, the Master of Balliol College, Oxford, who contends that Christianity is on the side of law as well as on the side of love, and that law is useless and impotent unless it is enforced and that the degree of force necessary to maintain the law is not a moral issue, and that "awful and horrible and indiscriminate indeed it is, and because that is so, the only justification for risking such use of force is that it is the only way of preventing anarchy with the prospect of worse and more continued violence."

Certain it is and sure, and the voices of all these Christian-thinking men assert that God thinks in terms of peace and not in terms of war. And yet as of old, God makes the wrath of God to praise Him. Far back in the times of Jeremiah, when war was never questioned, Jeremiah uttered the words, "I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end." Some day there will be enough people in the world who think as God thinks, and then in the triumphant words of this great prophetic Psalm "we shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree: and it shall be to the Lord for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off."

Furthermore, God doesn't think about *the past* as we think. Indeed it is about the past that the prophet is speaking. He is saying, "Let the wicked

forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." That is not the way we think about the past. We think of the past as a closed book. We are sure it is a closed book. What's done can't be undone, we say. We have crystallized our belief into proverbs. We say, "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." We say, "Be sure your sin will find you out." We write morbid poetry about the moving finger writing and our inability to cancel half a line. We speak about opportunity passing, never to return. Even religion often has thought in these terms. The whole continent of India, with its millions of people, is caught in the thought of the great law, the law of Karma that moves on inevitably and irretrievably grinding out the consequences of man's thoughts and actions to the last syllable of recorded time. "What is written is written."

But another note is sounded in the words of this ancient prophecy and in the Gospel of our Lord. Across the pages of the past God writes the astounding words, "I will abundantly pardon." Against all the morbidness and pessimism regarding the past, the message is flung out, "I believe in the forgiveness of sin." This does not mean the wiping out of consequences but the restoration of the sinner to favor. It is the faith to believe that life can be lived on the old terms of security and loyalty and trust. That is the way God thinks. He does not bear grudges. He does not try to get even. He does not rejoice in iniquity but rejoices in the truth. He believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. For you see what God is after is the making of men. He is not bent upon making a civilization. Civilizations have come and gone and will come and go again. The one enduring finality and end of all civilization and creation is character. Civilizations are built up and pulled down and a vast tidal movement of life is continually ebbing and flowing all for the purpose of creating the one eternal immortal and abiding value in life—a living soul.

You remember the old story of Penelope. She was the faithful wife, you remember, of Odysseus. During his long prolonged absence she was importuned by suitors who believed her husband dead and she promised to marry when she had finished the web which was to be a funeral pall for her father-in-law, Laertes. And so they watched eagerly for the finishing of the web. But each night in secret she unraveled what she had woven by day and thus delayed until her loyalty was rewarded in the safe return of her husband. What seemed to work for undoing and failure, brought at last triumph and vindication. If there is anything clear about the thoughts of God concerning us, it is that we should all come at last to the stature of perfect men in Christ Jesus.

If you will listen to the undertone of men's conversation today you will discover a persistent note of hopelessness. That note is never found in God's thinking, as far as it is revealed to us. Let us consider the most tragic, the darkest place in human history. Let us stand where the life of Christ crossed the highway of the world. Was there ever a more tragic—I was almost going to say a more hopeless—situation than that which ended in the death of Christ? It seems sometimes as if it were just a terrible piece of tragic bun-

gling. That is the way it seems to us when we read it now. But how did God think of it?

Jesus foretold His disciples clearly about the cross and the way His feet were turned towards it. He told them in plain words, not once but thrice, how it would all turn out concerning Him. Peter, the leader of the disciples, had confessed that He was the Son of God, the Saviour of the world, and Jesus had blessed him and proclaimed the fact that the Christian Church would be built upon this confessing man. And then He spoke of His coming suffering and His death and Peter laid hold of Him. The language is very vivid. It looks as if he took Him by the arm or the shoulder and began to rebuke Him, chiding Him, remonstrating with Him, denouncing Him as it were for making such a statement and saying, "God have mercy on thee: this shall never be." And then you remember the quiet words which Jesus spoke. Turning around, as if Peter had Him by the shoulder, He said, "Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art a stumbling-block unto me: for thou mindest not the things of God, but the things of men." Now put that into ordinary every-day language and what does it say? It says, Peter you don't think like God. You think like a man. You think the way to success is the way of power and force and authority. That is the way we think. That is not the way God thinks. God thinks the way to power is the way of suffering and sacrifice and that the cross is life's true coronation.

Suppose we begin to think the thoughts of God after Him, to think the way God thinks, to think the way Jesus thinks. It will lead our feet into the ways of peace and faith and hope and we will begin to walk with the spirits of just men made perfect. No, it is not difficult to know the way God thinks. He thinks the way our Lord Jesus Christ thinks and we know the way He thinks. Once in the days of His flesh He passed through the city of Samaria and the doors of the houses were slammed in His face. And James and John when they saw what had happened said, "Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them? But he turned, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them." It is said that Carlyle never wrote about the heroes of men without having the portrait of one of those heroes constantly before his eyes. So may it be with us that "we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."

Ascension Day, May 22.

THEME: *Eclipsed By a Cloud.*

JOHN H. HANGER.

SCRIPTURE: Acts 1:6-12.
TEXT: "And a cloud took him out of their sight." Acts 1:9.
HYMNS: "All hail the power of Jesus Name."—*Coronation, C. M.*
"We would see Jesus."—*Cushman,* 11, 10, 11, 10.

There are few of us, insensitive though we may be to the appeals of art and color, who have not at one time or another been perfectly intrigued by the sight of some cloud. It may have been some darkly rolling mass of cloud

which seemed almost to speak of lightning and thunder and rain and even destruction; or it may have been some lacy bit of white transparency skipping across the heavens on a summer afternoon, a bit of cloud which seemed to lift our spirits almost magically, even as we watched it.

Go back just a little in your thinking and it will not be long until you will recollect lying flat on your back gazing almost rapturously at the clouds that were floating above you, and building air-castles of staggering proportions among them. Some time ago someone handed me a copy of Bishop Quayle's book called a "Book of Clouds." I cannot remember any specific statement that book contained, but I can remember how deeply it stirred my soul as I realized that I too had had some of the same thrilling experiences watching the movement and the shape of forming clouds.

There are times when clouds appear almost as an answer to prayer, times when the hearts of men have been gladdened by the appearance of a cloud "about the size of a man's hand." Wanderers in desert countries have welcomed the rare appearances of clouds, clouds which broke the monotony of a cloudless sky and which seemed to promise a little cooling shade from the glare of a pitiless sun.

Someone, sometime, out of the midst of darkness, ventured to assert that "every cloud has a silver lining"; and when darkness has enveloped our lives we have often attempted to keep our spirits up by singing about the lining and trying to forget the cloud.

I.

But granting all the nice things that we may say and sing about the beauty and the utility and the wonder of clouds, the clouds that cross our heavens, the fact still remains that there are clouds that have no beautiful silver linings, at least none that are visible. Optimists though we may be, we are bound to admit that some clouds are most unwelcome and that many have no rainbows no matter how closely we may examine them.

There are clouds that eclipse all the light, clouds that shut out even the brilliance of a tropical sun; and when that sun doesn't shine, when no light gets through the clouds about all they can promise is darkness and foreboding. Experienced observers are telling us that the world is just about in that condition today spiritually as well as materially.

As long as a man can see the light of reason back of his suffering and his hardship, they will not be more than he can bear. His clouds will have their silver linings. I suppose there are many in our prisons today whose lives have been blighted forever by the imprisonment they have experienced. There are others, however, who have learned a lesson, who realize that they will have a road that is just as rocky as that of any other inmate when he gets out into the world again, but the light of their moral experience has put a rainbow on their cloud.

I am saying that there are clouds around and behind which the light of logic and reason sheds a faint glow. Someone has said, "if you eat salt-herrings, all the grace of God will not keep you from being thirsty." We can understand and endure the clouds which are the effect of a perfectly

intelligible cause. But not all spiritual clouds are like that. We see them every day, if not in our own lives then in the lives of others. Clouds there are without a hint of reason; huge, impenetrable, inky black clouds. Here are just a few of them: Why do good people suffer? Why does a young life so full of possibilities and hope end so prematurely? Why should a Jesus die on a cross? Why should a man who wants work and is able to work be denied it? Why should a man try to kill his neighbor in a world engulfing war?

II.

Jesus has been obscured from a multitude of people by just such clouds as these. There have always been philosophers who will insist that religion is a sort of wish-fulfillment, wishful thinking. Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick, himself has insisted that "nine-tenths of all atheism that is abroad today is due to the rationalization of discouragement."

I think it was discouragement which eventually obscured the risen Christ from His Disciples. In the Scripture Lesson, the writer says that when Jesus left the Disciples, a cloud took him out of their sight. I am not saying that the writer was not using thought forms which actually pictured a material and physical cloud coming down to earth and taking Christ away triumphantly upon it. Yet it is not so far removed from our thinking today to regard Jesus as being eclipsed from the vision of his followers by reason of the clouds which shut off their view of him.

Nothing does so much to becloud the view of Jesus as human sin. If we ignore him in the living of our lives he will disappear altogether. All of us have been interested in what is happening to the moral and religious standards of the people who are at war today. According to most writers the stages of Europe are featuring cheap and bawdy burlesque shows, for the first time in many years the theaters of London are remaining open on Sunday. War songs are so nauseatingly nasty that Maurice Chevalier recently refused to introduce one which French promoters had hoped would be a worthy successor to "Madelon" of the First World War. Of course, this let-down of morals in war time is to be expected, however it is not to be expected as the Church has said that "there is nothing really dangerous and indecent in all of this. It is just the exuberance and enthusiasm of youth." Our sympathies are with these people for we remember that we cannot shut the spirit and the teachings of Jesus out of one area of our lives without shutting him out altogether.

III.

However, still keeping the text from Acts in our own thought forms let us remember the words of the two men who stood by in white apparel, "Ye men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up to heaven? This Jesus who has been taken from you will come back just as you have seen him depart." Remove the clouds and Jesus stands resplendent before us. Tradition tells of an inscription which someone found, "Cleave the wood and thou shalt find me, lift the stone and I am there."

can no more measure a man's soul by the size of his barns, than we can measure his intelligence by the size of his hat. A man is not necessarily a fool because he is rich. This man was not called a "fool" because he had big barns and good crops. It is what he was going to do with it that determined his stature. There is no vice in money, much or little, as such, any more than there is virtue in poverty. How are we going to use it is the final question? That marks the kind of road along which we journey.

Now, Jesus gives another illustration of the same negative kind. This, too, is a rich man. Is it not surprising, that Jesus living in the simplicity of His day nevertheless saw that the greatest danger to the highest expression of life lay in riches, the love of wealth? He tells us of a man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and fared sumptuously every day. He rode out in splendor and in again, and never once saw the bleak poverty right there on his own door step. Not to see the bitter need of other people, but to pass by on the other side, that is life's low road. "Whoso hath this world's good and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" "He that loveth his own life shall lose it." That is how this man lived, and many seem to be following his example.

What does Jesus say about it? He shows us this man in the next life, and says, "in hell he lifted up his eyes." That way of living leads to utter poverty and suffering. Someone has defined "Hell" not as a place of fire, but as "finding out the truth when it is too late."

There are many in that kind of hell today, and the sting of it is here, they knew the truth, but thought they could get away with it. Parents and teachers in friendly counsel and entreaty have told them the truth, but they laughed at it, called it old fashioned, moss-backed, "things are different now," they said, and have gone their way to find out the truth when it was too late. Some people are staying away from church, because the preacher is telling the truth, and they don't want to hear it. This rich man in the parable found out the truth when it was too late. There was a great gulf fixed. He took the low road.

Now Jesus gives another illustration. This is not a rich man, but he is a rich man's son. What family tragedies it calls to mind! He gathered all together and straightway took his journey into a far country. Now if there is any infallible road to happiness is it not this. To be able to do exactly what one likes and have plenty of money to do it with? That, we think is "the life." Yet, here is the surprising thing about it. Jesus says it leads only to poverty, want, and famine. That famine is raging today in this land of colossal wealth. This young man found out the truth before it was too late, but he shows the delusion of a very popular way of living.

The road these three men took leads to the waste and loss of one's life. One man said life consists in getting plenty of money, plenty to eat, so that he can say to his soul, "Thou hast much goods laid up for many years." The other man said life is a cocktail party, a night club, with sumptuous fare, fine raiment, and let the world go to the dogs as the dogs came to Lazarus. The young man said, what young people are apt to say, life is self expression, doing as you like in a far country, where "there aren't no ten commandments and a man can raise a thirst," as Kipling puts it in his barrack room ballad.

Now Jesus turns to the constructive side. He has shown how some people lived who wasted and lost their lives. He tells us the way to save our lives

and find the high road. This He shows, first of all, in the familiar parable of the talents. "To one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to every man according to his several ability." What does that teach us about life and the best way to live it? It tells us that life is a trust, a stewardship. God has faith in us. God trusts us. We often speak of faith in God: how necessary it is for us to believe in God. God believes in us, so much so that He has entrusted us with life and its rich endowment. To one He has given five talents; to every man according to his several ability. Life is not our own, it's a trust. The one certain thing about a trust is we cannot use it as we like. We have stringent laws and heavy punishments for men who abuse trust funds.

One day, a lawyer came and asked Jesus about the high way of living. "What must I do to inherit eternal life." Very likely this lawyer had heard Jesus saying, "a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of things which he possesseth." "Man shall not live by bread alone." Then, by what does he live? What must I do to inherit eternal life? What is life and how can it be lived so as to invest it with eternal worth? To that question, Jesus answered: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart . . . and thy neighbor as thyself." That is the law and the prophets; the high road of life. Love showing itself in practical helpfulness, sacrificial service, going about doing good, and all this fruitage and flowering of living rooted back in love to God and our fellowmen. Without this grounding in the eternal love, we may give all our goods to feed the poor and even give our bodies to be burned, but it profiteth nothing.

"To every man there openeth
A Way and Ways and a Way,
And the high soul climbs the High Way
And the low soul gropes the Low;
And in between, on the misty flats
The rest drift to and fro.

To every man there openeth
A High Way and a Low,
And every man decideth
Which way his soul shall go."

John Oxenham.

MID-WEEK SERMON

THEME: ***Man's Spirit God's Lamp.***

Text: Proverbs 20:27.

The searching of our innermost parts. Our spirits lighted by God's Spirit. Remorse or repentance. Reversal or regeneration. God's use of spirit of man in places of leadership. Beacon lights to mark the path in the skies. What sort of men can God use?

Men of Vision: "May God keep out of the leadership of our movement men lacking in vision."—Mott. Built up of an understanding of actual conditions of the moment plus a knowledge of the power of God. God in the past; in the present; and in the future.

Men of Enthusiasm: "en theos'—in God! Believe in God. Believe in selves. God believes in us. Put away pessimism. Enthusiastic about Gospel; about men; about Church. Giving service as is: "The man content to wait for a streak of good fortune will probably wait until he has a stroke of paralysis."—Treves.

Men of Faith: Faith enables the Spirit of God to kindle the spirit of man. Scott and the face of Byron: "The lustre is there but it is not lighted up." We need faith to light our own lamp. Then from it we may light the lamps of many. For faith brings us into fellowship. Paul confessed his indebtedness in faith to many. Faith begets courage. With courage in fellowship we move forward and God rewards our faith by increasing the fellowship. Christ through us lights many another lamp.

TOPICS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE'S SOCIETIES

CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR: Y. P.—Topic—Newspapers and Radios. How to Read Our Newspapers. Eph. 4:25-27, 29-32.
Jr.—May Topic—Cooperation. Working Together for Peace. Gen. 13:8. Matt. 5:9. James 3:18.
LUTHER LEAGUE: Sr.—The Lord's Day. Acts 20:7.
Y. P.—Same.
Inter.—Living Clean. 1 Thess. 4:3, 4-7.
WALTHER LEAGUE: May Topic—Talents. Given in Abundance. Given for God's Purpose.

FOR THE BULLETIN BOARD

Beauty is more than skin deep, it is soul deep.
Secret sins don't stay secret long.
Signposts point no way in a blackout.
The heart needs lifting and can be lifted in prayer.
God makes a lily out of an ugly bulb in the mire.
Quiet seasons are sometimes more necessary than activity.
The morning has never yet failed to come.
Win the heart rather than the head.

MAY, FOURTH SUNDAY

CALL TO WORSHIP: "God be merciful unto us and bless us and cause His face to shine upon us." Psa. 66.
PSALM: 19.
PRELUDE: Prelude—*Bonnett.*
ANTHEM: Rejoice In The Lord—*Calkin.*
OFFERTORY: Offertoire—*Batiste.*
POSTLUDE: Finale—*Franck.*
OFFERTORY SENTENCE: "Let Thy hand be ready to help me; for I have chosen Thy precepts." Psa. 119.
OFFERTORY PRAYER: We give to Thee freely and gladly, knowing that only through Thee may we continue in the path of righteousness and love for fellow-men. Accept our offering and bless it to Thy use.
BENEDICTION: Even so might grace reign through righteousness, unto eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

SERMONS

THEME: *The Price of Liberty.*

NORMAN E. NYGAARD, D. D.

TEXT: "Take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumbling-block to them that are weak." I Cor. 8:1-13, 8-9.

Memorial services usually commemorate the lives of men and women. And it is right that they should. In too many quarters today humanity counts but little. A half million lives are snuffed out in two days in the low countries. Here is a dangerous intersection, what we call in common parlance 'a death corner.' It will cost forty thousand dollars to make it safe. Through the next ten or twelve years it will save ten or twenty lives. We balance forty thousand against that many people and decide to retain the forty thousand. When it comes to war we risk not a few individuals but regiments, divisions, army corps. Once a year we should pause to think of the individuals, the lives represented by the single crosses, and remember them. Yet would the true heroes say, "We want not this adulation and praise. Hold fast to the liberties for which we died."

These liberties form the background for our thought today, liberties which are in danger of being lost to humankind. Needless to say, every one of these liberties has a spiritual background and spiritual significance.

The story of our liberties cannot be told in one sermon. We can only hit a few of the high spots in the tale of man's struggle for human liberty. And, unfortunately, there are increasingly large areas in the world where the star of liberty has been dimmed. People have surrendered their liberties to the glib tales of politicos who have promised them national grandeur and economic security. Today they are learning what a terrible price they pay.

I shall not go back to Socrates or to the other sages of old who wrote of liberty and who made their contributions to the thinking of mankind in respect to freedom, but rather shall I turn to our Anglo-Saxon background, and the struggle of this people for freedom, for our liberties come down in the Anglo-Saxon line. We are accustomed to think of our struggle for independence in 1776 as a battle against the English. Instead it is merely

one phase of the battle of English-speaking people against the tyrannies of their oppressors.

The struggle may be conceived in four phases: first, the struggle for representative government; second, the struggle for a fair trial by one's peers; third, the struggle for religious liberty; and fourth, the struggle for freedom of speech. Milestones in that great battle are Magna Charta, the Petition of Rights, the Bill of Rights, the Declaration of Independence, and the Constitution of the United States.

In the long history of mankind, representative government is comparatively new. To be sure, there has always been in tribal governments forms of representation. The most primitive governments are tribal, and tribal governments have been governments of elders. But as tribes have enlarged, representative government has often proved unwieldy. There is no doubt but that a high degree of intelligence is necessary in governments which are either democratic or representative in form. When tribes have been enlarged there has often—usually, as a matter of fact,—been the seizure of the reins of power by a strong or shrewd chieftain. Sometimes the chief or medicine man was not strong but was apparently the possessor of certain magic which he would employ if necessary to put down those who questioned his authority. At other times he would be the one possessing the greatest physical power. The government of such an one would be similar to the government of a herd of elk or buffalo where the most powerful buck reigns. Eventually some younger buck would dispute his prowess; a fight would ensue; and if the younger were the stronger and the more sagacious there would be a change of leadership.

Eventually as the tribes became larger, developing into a nation leaders became more and more autocratic. And, in some form or other there has been in every such autocracy an idea that there is a kinship between the leader, usually a king or emperor, and the divine. The Stuarts of England, the Louis' of France, were sturdy exponents of the theory of the divine right of kings. They not only ruled by the force of their arms but by endowment from on high. Even to touch the king—if one were a commoner—was tabu. The person of the king is sacred. Our present crop of dictators have the same "*divine right*" complex, while our present group of western European kings have a totally different view of their position of leadership. They are not the rulers, but the ministers, or servants, of their people. Technically they are given titles indicative of dominion: actually for them their task is to serve. "Ich dien"—"I serve"—is the motto of whoever may become the prince of Wales.

But representative government was slow in coming. Kipling expresses the struggle in these heroic words:

> "All this we have of freedom, all we use or know—
> This our fathers bought for us long and long ago.
> Leave to live by no man's leave, underneath the law.
> Lance and torch and tumult, steel and grey goose-wing
> Wrenched it, inch and ell and all, slowly from the King."

Ancient Britain was governed representatively. There was a township meet-

ing called a moot. The next higher Anglo-Saxon division was the 'hundred'. Next above the 'hundred' was the 'folk-moot' of the small kingdoms. Later, in 954, when England became a kingdom the 'folk-moot' became the 'shire-moot'. The shire was the same as our county. The freeman, however, expressed himself by the vote in the 'tun-moot', our town-meeting of today.

But gradually, following the conquest of England by William the Conqueror in 1066, the kings acquired great power. And at last in King John we had the absolute despotism of the thesis, "The King can do no wrong." But, as usually happens when a despot goes too far, John finally took so much power into his hands as to crystallize the opposition to him. The people of his time said of John, "Foul as it is, hell is defiled by the fouler presence of John." Under Charter Oak upon an island near Runnymede in 1215, John signed the great document which was to be the first step among the Anglo-Saxons in securing to the people the right to representative government, Magna Charta. Though he proceeded almost at once to disavow it, it still exists and free-men in England held to it and returned to it through the centuries. But this was only one step in the struggle for representative government.

We must realize, to be sure, that representative government is not infallible. Its processes are slower than those of a dictatorship. Sometimes inequalities continue for long before they are set right. Relief for people injured by changing economic conditions comes slower in democracies than in dictatorships. But would any of us today surrender our precious heritage, the heritage for which our fathers fought, and bled, and died, for the doubtful security of European absolutisms?

True, jury trials are not free from abuses; but the two greatest safeguards of the individual liberties of Anglo-Saxons are habeas corpus and trial by jury. Both of these safeguards are denied in Germany today. The Gestapo calls upon you in the dead of night. Without knowing the charges, without an opportunity to confront the complaining witnesses, without a chance to defend yourself, you are taken to a concentration camp or lined up before a wall and shot. The same occurs in Russia, and to a lesser extent in Italy. And the same condition occurred in medieval England and in the American colonies. But our fore-fathers, imbued with ideals of justice, time and again fought for and obtained this right. Some of them died in the struggle. But they were willing to die if in their death the abuses of justice might be done away.

No one of us who believe in them assume that the rights of habeas corpus and trial by jury are never abused. The former right has played into the hands of criminal gangsters again and again. Sometimes it has been abused also when venal gangsters were sitting as judges on the bench. There is no doubt but what gangsters and their crooked friends have taken advantage of it. And the right to trial by jury has been abused as well. There have been trials where juries, in the heat of prejudice against certain individuals, have decided on the basis of their hatreds instead of on the basis of justice. We recognize those evils, but if you believe in a trial by your peers you had better stay with the democracies. Today they alone cling to it.

In England, or in France, in the Scandinavian countries, in Holland, and

Belgium, before their recent occupation, and especially in the United States, you can worship God in any way that you see fit. You can be an atheist if you will. You can be a Mohammedan or a Hindu. You are free to go to church or free to stay at home. No one will hinder your choice. But I would remind you that this is a liberty which has been purchased with the blood of thousands of brave men and women. No group of people in all the world have been free from religious intolerance unless it be the Quakers and the Moravians. Catholics have persecuted Lutherans: Lutherans have persecuted Anabaptists. Episcopalians have persecuted Presbyterians: Presbyterians have persecuted Congregationalists. Congregationalists have persecuted Baptists. Whenever any church gained an official ascendancy in a country or a colony, abuses crept in. The right to believe as you would and to have your children educated without coercion by any religious group is still a living question among some of the South American republics.

But it is not even an issue in the totalitarian states. You must believe what the State wants you to believe. In Russia the state sponsors atheism, and heavy are the burdens you must bear if you would still worship God. You must pass buildings which were once churches but are now used as centers of ridicule for religious faiths. In Germany it is a new religion, anti-Jewish, pro-Nazi. While you may continue to use the New Testament if you desire, the Old Testament is out. It is a book of Jewish superstitions. And the New Testament God of the Germans is not the God whom Jesus revealed at all. If you would believe in the God of Jesus you had better put your affairs in order, for you will be sent off to a concentration camp.

Now do we come to our last privilege as Americans, the right to the freedom of speech and freedom of the press. There is no right more precious than that; yet there is no right which is more frequently abused. Unfortunately, also, it is a right which must be given up in war-time. The government takes to itself the privilege of censorship and not only censors material which may be untrue and presents a distorted picture of the condition of affairs, but also is able to black out truth. But, except for war-time, in the average American community, the freedom of press and speech is part of our heritage.

Yet here again is eternal vigilance the price of safety. And in St. Louis one of our great American newspapers today is fighting a fight, which is your fight and mine as well, for freedom to print the truth as it sees it. A judge, who is apparently one of the rare despots of the American bench, has held the newspaper in contempt of court for daring to criticize one of his decisions. The newspaper will fight all the way to the supreme court if necessary to uphold the right to a free press. And the newspaper's fight is our fight.

As Americans, however, we ought to bear in mind Paul's word, the text of our sermon, "Take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumbling-block to them that are weak." It is the right of a free people to free speech: it is their responsibility to speak in reasoned and temperate language. It is the right of a free people to a free press: but a free people also have the responsibility of defending their freedom against those, who, abusing that right, seek to bring about the downfall of our free institutions.

We ought, for the protection of democracy and the rights which have been

won at such heroic sacrifice, to insist that no fifth column activities shall be carried on within the borders of our land. And these freedoms that we have won are not jeopardized when we insist that those who would overthrow our country by force and violence must keep still.

My home is precious to me: my country is likewise precious. Honest criticism of administration is necessary. The right to criticize must be upheld. But there is accorded me no right to destroy my country's institutions. And if I organize a bund which will be a menace to my nation's free institutions I should either be deported, if I am an alien, or put behind barb-wire if I am a citizen.

Americans have died for these causes: representative government; the right to trial by jury; freedom of worship; free speech and a free press. Citizens, hold fast to those rights. Never regard them cheaply. They are the foundation stones of liberty.

Sunday After Ascension.

THEME: *This Cup (Communion).*

W. FRANKLIN HARKEY, D. D.

TEXT: "And he took the Cup . . ." Matt. 26:27.
HYMNS: "Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing."—*Stuttgart*, 87, 87.
"'Tis Good, Lord, To Be Here."—*Dedication, S. M.*

The simplicity of the sacramental hour is unique. Jesus approached it with poise and earnestness. The elements He used to teach a great truth were simple. The words He used were expressive. The symbolism taught could not fail to impress every one. Bread and wine were commonplace things. He took these and instituted a Supper that has through the centuries been satisfying and stimulating. By this celebration, which we call, "The Lord's Supper," or the Communion, multitudes of God's children have been fed and their faith quickened.

Too often there is a danger about things that are used frequently—they become common and we fail to catch their significance. There is a subtle danger as we sit at the communion table. Here are things that have become familiar to every Christian, bread and wine, cups and plates, receptacles on which rest these things. By such common practices spiritual truths often slip through our minds without ever making a scratch. But, these things need not become meaningless. They have a suggestiveness about them that is old and yet is ever new.

The inspired record of the observance of the Passover feast from which comes the observance of our holy Communion is quite simple. "And He took the cup." This cup is the sacramental cup. As such it can never become commonplace. In it is found salvation and hope. It is filled with all spiritual good. It overflows with blessings. As one looks into it he discovers certain things.

The Cup of Atonement.

The cup contains the great spiritual realities which the theologian has called, the atonement. What is it? This is a term which is not used as

much in preaching today as it was in a former day. But, we must never forget that the cup which our Lord took contains the atonement which He made for the sins of the race. This fact is greater than any definition that might be given. Many definitions have been given as to the meaning of the atonement. In none of them will we find all the truth that lies back of the fact of the Incarnation,—God tabernacling in human flesh and suffering and dying for the sins of men. Suffice it to say that no explanation is satisfactory that leaves out the all prevailing fact that Christ died for us, the just for the unjust that He might bring us to God.

In the moments when we have thought deeply upon the cross we have discovered not only the fact of the love of God, but we have realized that our sin and the sin of the world crucified the Lord of Glory. All of us have felt like Martin Luther who was found on one occasion before a crucifix, sobbing, "For me! for me!"

The Cup of Resignation.

As we peer into the cup which our Lord took we will also find the spirit of resignation. If we follow Him into Gethsemane we will understand more fully what this means. In great agony He cried out, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt." Here was the cup of suffering which the world could not understand.

Jesus was holding the cup of suffering and death, the cup of sacrifice, the chalice of forgiveness for all men, and the goblet of redemption. How little our suffering is in comparison with His! Our crosses are small when they are lifted by the side of His. But, He has taught a lesson in the spirit of resignation which was displayed. Men are impatient. God is patient and long suffering. Out of the deep experiences of suffering George Matheson rises to sing,

> "O Cross that liftest up my head,
> I dare not ask to fly from Thee;
> I lay in dust life's glory dead.
> And from the ground there blossoms red
> Life that shall endless be."

And it is Whittier who bids us contemplate the shame of it all,

> "Through all the depths of sin and loss
> Drops the plummet of the Cross;
> Never yet abyss was found
> Deeper than the Cross could sound."

The Cup of Blessing.

It will be shortsightedness and failure on our part if we fail to see the blessings that are in the cup. Paul reminds the Corinthian Christians of this fact, "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?"

Among the blessings contained in the cup is the forgiveness of sin. By taking the cup Jesus becomes the Saviour. It is through Him that men receive the forgiveness of sin. The dying thief could cry in the last moments of his agony for pardon and receive the assurance that he would be with the Lord in glory. Nowhere can sinners realize more clearly that Christ

is able to forgive sin than at the Lord's Table, for here are the emblems of His broken body and shed blood.

One of the joys of the communion hour is found in the sense of fellowship. Around the world are found those who love the Lord. Their love breaks down racial barriers, animosities and hates, and brings hope that the brotherhood of man shall be finally consummated. The cup of the Lord is larger than any one group or sect of Christians. Within His all pervading love Jesus thought of the time when His disciple should be one. Toward that end and aim Christians everywhere should unite in prayer and in fellowship.

The Cup of Spiritual Usefulness.

"And He took the cup." This cup is a pledge of a sacramental life. It was so that John the beloved disciple took it. He went out to live with and for Christ. It has proven such throughout the centuries. This cup has ever been the symbol of a dedicated life. It has ever held for the saint of God his pledge for a life of faith and service to God. It was so in the case of Polycarp and Chrysostom and Augustine and Athanasius and Luther and Calvin and Knox, and in our generation it has brought renewed vigor to countless lives.

Out from the holy hour men and women have gone resolved that their lives shall reflect more clearly the spirit of their Lord and Master. As a sacrament was in the ancient time a pledge of the soldier to be true, loyal and obedient unto death, so in the breaking of bread and in the cup lies our pledge of allegiance to our Lord. In that long distant past life was a very grim warfare for the Christian. It is not otherwise now. The call to be strong and valiant is as imperative as ever. The need for moral earnestness was never more apparent.

One of the stories emanating from Scotland is that concerning a poor widow who lived in a thatched cottage in a glen. One day a carriage with a lady inside stopped at the door. The lady asked for a drink of water, and it was carried to her by the widow in a cup. Later she learned that the lady who had used the cup was Queen Victoria. The cup became a rare vessel about the house, and whenever visitors came, the widow would relate how the Queen one day stopped at her cottage and drank from the cup. The cup of the poor widow became a priceless thing. The cup which we take at communion is priceless because our Lord took it. The touch of Christ has given to "this cup" its supreme value and meaning.

As we take this cup we remember our Lord, and we do not forget that it contains for us His atoning sacrifice; and, it reveals the true spirit of resignation for Him and for us; and, its blessings are given to every child of God; and, we must not forget the sacramental life which it enjoins.

PRAYER

Ever blessed God, we thank Thee for Thy love shown toward us in our Lord Jesus Christ. We bless Thee for Thy atoning sacrifice, and for the grace given unto us to say, "Thy will be done." May we not forget that the privileges of this holy hour of communion call for a sacrificial life. Bless Thy cause and lead us in Thy service until we shall sit with Thee, in Thine upper and better Kingdom, in Jesus' name we ask it. Amen.

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

Broadening Christian Horizons: Peter's Vision.

LESSON: Acts 10:1—11:18. Print Acts 11:5-18.

GOLDEN TEXT: "And Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons." Acts 10:34.

DEVOTIONAL READING: Psalm 98.

INTER. & SR. TOPIC: Overcoming Prejudices.

Y. P. & ADULTS: Overcoming Prejudices.

One of the most spectacular examples of the influence of Christ on a man's life is found in the experience of Peter. His life had been spent around the Sea of Galilee, fishing. After three years of association with Christ he was on the road to developing into a world citizen. (Read chap. 10).

There are four centurions mentioned in the New Testament and each one of them is a noble character. Among the most noble was this man Cornelius of Caesarea. Cornelius was a man of prayer and was seeking for light.

The account of Peter's experience here is that which he himself gave in Jerusalem before the Church and not long after the event. The house where the vision occurred is still pointed out in Joppa. The revelation came to Peter as a distinct shock. Peter had yet much to learn.

The great sheet which filled the sky was a symbol of the Christian Gospel which was intended for all the earth. The four cords attached to the four corners which let the sheet down, were tokens that the Gospel was to be carried to all the points of the compass. The meaning of these features of the vision doubtless became clear to Peter as he afterward pondered them.

God is very patient with His children. He realizes that the revelation which He is making runs counter to all of Peter's previous training. Peter fell asleep a sectarian. He awoke a cosmopolitan. Back of this transformation lay those three years of close fellowship with Christ.

The narrative of the interview between Peter and Cornelius is one of the most beautiful and touching in the entire Scripture. When Peter came out of the trance he was in a state of great perplexity. He knew that the Lord had spoken to him but he was still in doubt as to the exact meaning of the vision. And certainly he was at a loss how to apply it to life and conduct. But God did not leave him long in doubt. There came three men who urged him to go to the house of Cornelius. When God lays upon us duties, He prepares through His Holy Spirit the way for the fulfillment of those duties.

EVENING SERMON

THEME: *Ready For His Coming.*

GEORGE MCPHERSON HUNTER, D. D.

TEXT: "Received into glory." I Timothy 3:16.

HYMNS: "Come Lord, And Tarry Not."—*Greenwood, S. M.*
"Lo, He Comes, With Clouds Descending."—*Sicilian Hymn.*

Augustine, in 390, said Ascension Day had been kept since apostolic times and today we are considering a line from an old hymn, "He was received up into glory."

It was eminently natural and an integral part of the doctrine of the resurrection that Christ should ascend back into the home He had left. He had come from God and went back to God. He had stooped to clothe Himself with flesh. Now He was casting aside that garment and ascending up into heaven.

Our union with Him we should remember presages our destiny. If we are born of God from above, we shall surely go to Him who said, "Where I am there ye shall be also."

Surely it's we Christians who know many things worldlings never know. We know on Whom we have believed. We know what our Lord has done for us and:

We Know Where Christ Is:

The description given in the Acts of the Apostles says He was removed out of sight, from the eyes of the Apostles by a cloud shutting Him out of their vision. Thus He went into the unseen world.

The Bible says definitely there is an unseen world, and it is very near.

This world we know is separated by a very thin veil from the unseen world into which Christ went.

It is not some far distant place. But close at hand, and one day the angels will put out their hands and draw aside the curtain. And we shall see with naked eyes what God hath prepared for them that love Him.

In our nation where we were linked to the sea and ships, we knew what it was to go down to the pier head and see our friends sail away; go out of sight, down over the horizon. And until their arrival was reported in the newspapers, we could only speculate where they would be. We hoped and prayed that God was keeping them on the sea, but did not know for a certainty.

Every family had a tragic story of ships that never returned. Did not one thousand perish on the sea every year?

We never knew definitely and dogmatically where our ships were.

We lived, moved and had our being in a world of uncertainty.

Here is a certainty revealed to us, handed down in the Church, written in God's word. We know, "He was received up into glory."

We Know What He Is Doing:

Did I not hear the mother say often, "My son in Africa will know what I am doing at home. But I don't know what he is doing."

About our ascended Lord we know definitely what He is doing. We are not left in doubt about it.

He is praying for us.

"He ever liveth to make intercession for us."

There is His chief task praying for everyone who trusts in Him.

Aaron the high priest of the children of Israel had a breast plate whereon were written names of Israelites and he took them into the Holy Place.

Christ has our names, yours and mine, written on His heart, graven on his palms, and every single day and every single time you pray, He prays within the heavenly places. You are not praying alone but in the royal company of the Ascended Lord.

"I go and prepare a place for you." He is the advance guard crossing the stream and when I come He will take me over.

It becomes a personal matter for me to know where I am going when the hurley-burley of life is over. If I know that some day I must go into the other world, surely I should know where I am going, and who will meet me. Is it wise to be uncertain? Surely we are called to know where we are going.

Once upon a time, as the children's stories begin, a king had a court fool who kept the king and his courtiers in constant laughter with foolish jests. One day the king gave him a rod saying, "If you ever meet a bigger fool than yourself give him this rod."

Well it happened, as it happens to high and low, the king fell sick, and was near death, and the fool crept to his Majesty's bedside, looked at him with eyes full of pity.

"Fool I am about to leave you."

"Sire do you know where you are going?"

"No, poor fool, no."

"Then here is the rod. I have met a bigger fool than myself."

We Know He Will Come Again:

This is a subject that is blackened by controversy and made difficult and dangerous by bold assertions about the sign of the times.

The return of Christ to His disciples is capable of different interpretations.

He came back again when the Holy Spirit was given at Pentecost.

He came back again when Jerusalem was destroyed.

We have seen the Son of Man coming in the great crises of history like this one we are in now, when an old order of things that we know and love passes away, when that old order gives way to a new one, and it seems as if the whole generation is brought into judgment and the world gets a fresh start.

We know from Christ's own words that He shall return when those who sleep in Him shall be raised from the dead and be forever with the Lord. And we shall all be judged.

Once when Dr. Johnson was depressed and the fear of judgment lay heavy in him, he was reminded of the merits of the ascended Lord.

"Madam," said Dr. Johnson, "I do not forget the merits of my Redeemer but my Redeemer has said He will set some on his right hand and some on his left."

During this season we should remember He will return when all those who know him will sing:

> "Thy name O Jesus be forever blessed,
> Alleluia, Alleluia."

Be ready for His coming, "watch and pray for in such an hour as ye know not, the Son of Man cometh."

Shackleton in his search for the South Pole left some of his men on Elephant Island. Getting the supplies he returned but the ice pack round the island blocked his entrance. Day after day he tried but failed. Finally

one day an opening came and he ran in, got his men abroad before the gap closed again.

"How did it happen you were all packed and ready for my coming?" he asked.

"Sir, you said that you would come back for us. And we never gave up hope. Whenever the sea was partly clear of ice, we rolled up our sleeping bags and packed our things, saying, 'Maybe Shackleton will come today.' We were always ready for your coming."

Always ready for His coming is the message of Ascension Week. Even so came Lord Jesus. Amen.

MID-WEEK SERMON

THEME: ***The Reputation of God.***

TEXT: Isaiah 55:13.

Jew in Babylon became a merchant: "Born to be a priest, he seemed also born to be a trader." In his business he exerted considerable influence.

The Home of the Exile: Things money cannot buy. To the exile it never gave a home. Jew found his home in God, in duty, in righteousness. He rested his heart in the Lord. Through Isaiah God called to obedience and repentance. His destiny greater than trader, purveyor, or money-lender. To be priest and prophet to nations. He had lost his home. But home is where the heart is. Put your heart with God. Chapter pictures regenerate world. Wait for God's salvation.

The Reputation of God: Life and lot of the Jew "shall be to the Lord for a Name." For a reputation! When nations see it, shall praise God. Were Jews in exile thinking of God's reputation? Yet God declares his reputation affected. "The heavens declare the glory of God." The unfolding seasons speak of his providence. But God has tied his reputation up with man. This is message of chapter, of book, that God entrusts his reputation to man.

The Trust of God: This is the meaning of the Incarnation. "Last of all he sent his Son"—Luke 20:9-16. The reputation we are giving God. We believe in God and have no desire to dishonor him. Then be counted among his people. Honor him in the Church. What other organization so seeks to honor him? Let the light of Gospel and Church fall on your thinking. "The first necessity in thinking is not breadth but altitude." Think of the Church as the Witness of God, a place for believers and servants, a House of Prayer and Worship. Think of the Bible as the Word of God. Think of Christ as the Son of God and the Savior of men.

TOPICS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE'S SOCIETIES

CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR: Y. P.—How to use Radios. Phil. 4:8. I John 2:15-17.
Jr.—May Topic—Cooperation. Working and Worshipping Together. I Cor. 12:12-27.
LUTHER LEAGUE: Sr.—Church Leaders. I Peter 4:7-11.
Y. P.—Same.
Inter.—Christians in Japan. I John 1:5-10.
WALTHER LEAGUE: May Topic—Talents. Problems. Service Project—A Talent Quest—for Music, drama, reading, etc. Handicraft, literary work.

JUNE, FIRST SUNDAY

CALL TO WORSHIP: "Faithful is He that calleth you, Who will also do it."
PSALM: 150.
PRELUDE: Legend—*Wieniawski.*
ANTHEM: Even My—*Warren.*
OFFERTORY: Allegretto—*Beethoven.*
POSTLUDE: Grand Choeur—*Guilmant.*
OFFERTORY SENTENCE: "Give unto the Lord thy God, according as the Lord thy God hath blessed thee."
OFFERTORY PRAYER: Thy omnipotence, O God, is our salvation unto Eternity. We rely upon Thee in all things, even temporal things, that mean little in Thy great work but much in our little undertakings. Pray, give us an understanding of the divine plan, so we may give heed to the things of God.
BENEDICTION: The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you all the days.

SERMONS

THEME: ***The Charter of the Christian Church.***

HUGH THOMSON KERR, D. D.

TEXT: "Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost, is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." Acts 1:8.
HYMNS: "Our Blest Redeemer, Ere He Breathed."—*St. Cuthbert,* 86, 84.
"Jesus, Truest Friend, Unite."—*Palms of Glory,* 77, 77.

Sometimes one wonders if preaching does any good. Does it influence people? Does it change them? Does it lift them out of their irritability, their prejudices and their besetting sins? Do they ever judge themselves under it and do they ever change their minds because of it?

Jesus "came preaching" and frequently He must have had a feeling of discouragement. Again and again we find Him charging His disciples with lack of understanding. "Have ye not yet faith?" For three years He had tried to teach them His message and the significance of His mission in the world. Failing to make them understand by word, He had undertaken to reveal His message to them in a pageant which He Himself staged riding into Jerusalem upon a colt.

Surely now after His resurrection, when He revealed Himself to them in His spiritual and living power, they would understand. But no, they did not understand. Dr. Matthew Brown Riddle used to speak of "the infinite capacity of the human mind to resist the entrance of knowledge"; and it seemed impossible for these disciples to understand our Lord's message. The old question was again upon their lips, "Wilt thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" It was the old question about politics and power and the right of Israel to govern itself. They were still politically-minded, and we cannot but wonder at our Lord's patience with them as they continued to misunderstand Him and His work. One can read the feeling of determination that was in His mind when He said to them, "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons." He shut the door, as it were, on speculation regarding the future and replied to the deeper need of their lives which had failed to find expression. We will keep in mind that these are our Lord's last words and what He said to them was this, "Ye shall

receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." Having said this He immediately vanished out of their sight. This was His last message. It contains His marching orders for His followers and outlines what may be called the Charter of the Christian Church. In it we find set forth in clear language three principles which were to regulate their lives and conduct and program, and these same principles must guide the Christian Church in its service in the world down through the ages.

First of all He proclaimed *the area of responsibility.* He placed responsibility squarely upon their shoulders. They had been full of speculative inquiries concerning the future. They were saying in effect, "Surely somebody will do something. It must be somebody's business to set things right. Surely you, yourself—the Risen Lord—will do something about the situation in which Israel finds itself. All power is given unto you. Will you now, yourself, set things right and restore the government to Israel?" They were expecting help from some quarter beyond themselves. And Jesus said, "No! Nobody is going to do what you ask. If anything is to be done you, yourselves, must do it." Notice the emphasis in the words He spoke to them. "*Ye* shall receive power." "The Holy Spirit also shall come upon *you.*" "*Ye* shall be my witnesses." Jesus placed responsibility for the future upon the shoulders of these eleven men. They were not exceptional men. They were ordinary men whom He had selected as His disciples. I imagine we could find eleven such men in this church, at least men who have had better training than these eleven apostles, and Jesus said to them, "If you fail, if you do not carry through this mission which is assigned to you, then everything fails and my mission fails."

Now this is a principle which distinguishes the Christian Church. The Christian Church, as we understand it, is not governed by a little group, a professional group, a priestly group. The Protestant principle of the Church is embodied in the traditional words which speak of the "priesthood of believers." It is the people themselves, lay men and women, who carry the responsibility of the Church. It is their church and whenever it has become professionalized then we have weakness and a blind following which does not make for reality in religion. This, then, is the first provision in the Charter of the Christian Church. Whenever people assume the balcony view of life and take the spectator attitude, as if they were looking on at a game played by professionals in which they are not participating, then the Church has lost its sense of mission.

In the second place He promised them *adequate equipment for their task.* No one knew better than Jesus how inadequate these men really were. Every one of them had failed Him. One of His followers was a suicide because of his treachery. One of them had denied Him with cursing. They all had deserted Him and they were all weak and unworthy and would continue to be weak and unworthy. Jesus knew all that, but promised that He would empower them and furnish them with the ability that would match their responsibility. He Himself would furnish them, transform them, remake them. "Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost shall come

upon you." And what He promised was realized. They became dynamic men, personalities that had the driving force of great convictions. Look at Peter. What a powerful personality he became through the Spirit of the Living God operating through him and using him!

It will help us to think about this word 'power.' It is the word from which our word 'dynamite' comes. No new power is ever created. It is all old power that is being used, power that has been resident in the world since time began.

Since the world began the mystery that we know as radio power has always been in the atmosphere and has always been available for us. It has been knocking at the door through the centuries and saying, as it were, "If any man open the door I will come in." So it is with spiritual power. "All power is given unto me," said Christ. This spiritual power is resident in Him and is always available. We release what is called physical power, God's power in the universe, through an instrument, a turbine, a Diesel engine, a motor, a microphone, an incandescent lamp; some medium, some instrument that will convey the power and make it available.

And the only instrument, the only medium, the only means by which the moral power of God can be released is a human personality. The only medium through which His moral character, His holiness, His love, His patience, His grace, His personality can flow out into the world is through you and through me, the highest channel available for His use. What God has done through and by certain men and women is known to all the world. Personalities have been lifted up and made great by the inflowing of the Divine energy, and all this power became available with the resurrection and the ascension of our Lord. The tragedy is that we try to do by ourselves what we can do only when equipped by the power of the Spirit.

It is not money that makes a church. It is not music or preaching that make a church. It is the power of God working through men; redeeming, saving, transforming them. In a recent story the heroine says to her lover, "Have faith in God, Paul." He replied, "But how does one have faith? I would believe if I could." She replied, "There are two things that are required and you have attained one already." "What is that?" he said. She replied, "You must be emptied of self before faith can come in." "And what is the other?" "That, Paul, I cannot tell you. I do not know when and how God chooses to enter the empty chamber." No, we do not know how He enters or when He enters, but we do know that He does enter and that it is the activity of the Living God which inspires and elevates and transforms human lives; and without this transforming power of the Living God we fail and the Church fails.

The third principle of the Charter of the Christian Church is expressed in the words, "Ye shall be my witnesses." The Church is provided with *a definite task and a definite program* and a definite way of life. The power of God that works in and through men is for a purpose. It is expressed in the words, "Ye shall be my witnesses." In other words the Church is equipped to spread Christianity in the world. Every Christian is a witness-bearer, and to be a witness-bearer one must first of all have knowledge of the facts to which he witnesses.

It was demanded in the early church that the followers of Christ should

be eyewitnesses of His resurrection. We may not be eyewitnesses of His resurrection, but we certainly must experience the risen life ourselves before we can testify to it. And having knowledge of the facts, then absolute fearlessness is demanded and it is this which we see in the early Christian Church. The word 'witness' is the same word as the word 'martyr.' And still in our day martyrdom is often the reward of a true and faithful witness; as we see in China, in Korea, in Russia and in Germany.

And how did they go about witnessing for Christ, and how do we go about witnessing for Christ? Well, they began talking about it wherever they were, on sea or land, in the pulpit or out of the pulpit. They just talked about Christ and that is the way Christianity has always spread.

That is the way this Church has grown, people have just talked about Christ. People who never think that they are preaching have borne witness to Christ on the golf links and in society and at the luncheon table; and by bearing such witness Christianity has grown and spread here and throughout the world. And there is no other way, for the Church is the body of Christ, and it is through Christian people that the Living Christ performs His miracles and conveys His message.

In a celebrated passage in *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* Gibbons analyzes the cause of the triumph of Christianity in the Roman world. He gives five reasons for the enlarging influence of the Gospel; the inflexible and the intolerable zeal of Christians, the doctrine of a future life, the miraculous powers of the early church, the pure and austere morals of Christians, and union with the power of the Roman Empire. All of these were operative, but the first was primary and essential.

The Church grew because of "the inflexible and intolerable zeal of Christians." They talked Christ, they lived Christ. Dr. Glover expressed the same thought in the now familiar words, that the early Christians "out-thought, out-lived and out-died" the pagan world. This, then, is the Charter of the Christian Church: "Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost, is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."

Whitsunday (Pentecost).

THEME: *The Gospel In a Headline.*

PAUL R. KIRTS, D. D.

TEXT: John 3:16.
HYMNS: "Come, Holy Ghost, Our Souls Inspire."—*Mendon, L. M.*
"Gracious Spirit, Dove Divine."—*Univ. College,* 77, 77.

Jesus' ministry soon began to show results. One of the highest governing body of the Jews, Nicodemus—came to see Jesus at night. Jesus explained to Nicodemus, a religious leader himself, how men must enter the Kingdom of heaven. The text is the gospel in a headline.

I. The world is the object of God's love. Nicodemus, in common with his fellow Pharisees, believed that salvation was confined to a single race. Theirs was a narrow conception: that the Messiah would judge with extreme

severity all those not of the chosen people. If we seek the reason for such a belief we can find it in history.

God chose Israel as the race which was to be the bearer of his truth. By natural endowment, by innate spiritual capacity, the race was adapted to be the agent of God. We may think of Israel as a safety deposit box in which the treasure was deposited for safe keeping. The treasure was the true religion—belief in the one true God—manifesting himself as the God of grace. Or we may think of Israel as a protective channel through which flowed the pure stream of religion. On the banks of this stream were imperfect, impure religions which would defile it.

True religion, however, was committed to a narrow channel only that its true nature should be preserved. In no sense was it to be selfishly claimed by one race, but was intended to be guarded and kept that it might be dispensed to the peoples of the earth. All through the Old Testament there are clear indications of universality. This universal note is heard in a little group of psalms (Ps. 96-98), wherein is suggested a Messianic hope. These psalms look forward to a period when God shall "come and not keep silence," when "He cometh to judge the world with righteousness and the peoples with equity." The way in which this is to be carried out is left indefinite, but an imperishable hope is expressed:

> "Jehovah hath made known his salvation:
> His righteousness hath he openly showed in the sight of the nations."—*Ps. 98:2.*

In the course of history Israel proved weak. The kingdom was divided. Jeroboam set up shrines of idol worship. None of the kings removed the golden calves from Bethel and Dan; indeed, under Ahab, who was influenced by Jezebel, the departure from faith was completed by the introduction of the worship of Baal. The only bright spot in the blackout is the loyalty of Elijah and Elisha. The nation turned its back on God and finally was taken captive. Such is the history of the chosen race.

In opposition to those who insisted on narrowing the love of God, Jesus affirmed that God's love broods over not one nation merely but over all the nations. God loves men, all men, individually, not in mass, but one by one, and everyone: high and low, rich and poor, powerful and weak, lovely and unlovely. He yearns to bring them all under his gracious rule. Who can measure the depth or mark the boundaries of his love?

II. God gave his Son as the Gift of his love. So dearly did he love the world that he gave his only Son. Note that two-letter word "so"; it refers both to the object and the Gift of his love. His love is limitless, for he gave the best he had. The preciousness of the gift indicates how much he loves men.

Jesus spoke of God as Father. The whole language of Jesus about God, his attitude to God, implies throughout that God is a real Father. Then did it not cost God something to give his only Son? In the word "gave"—Moffatt translates "gave up"—we read all the humiliation of Christ, his life and death. During the ages until his birth, the Son was with the Father. From the beginning Christ was the Lamb slain, as the Apostle Paul put it.

Here is a great mystery. The plan of salvation is rooted in a God who is three persons in one. The Father sent the Son to show the way to fulness of life, and the Son, when he returned to the glory which he had enjoyed before the world was, sent the Spirit to apply his redemption to men. God gave up his Son to be the Saviour of men whom the Spirit endows with faith to believe.

III. God's love asks us to have faith. God loved men so dearly that he gave up his only Son, *so that* everyone who *believes* in him may have life. We receive life from him as a free gift through faith in Christ.

Faith is belief plus trust: an act both of the understanding and the will. We have life through faith in Christ. Belief in his historical existence and in the truth of his claims may be produced by evidence, but reliance upon him for life cannot be. It is the gift of God (Eph. 2:8); the Spirit applies the truth to our hearts.

The essence of faith in Christ as Saviour is a spiritual appreciation of the ethical value of the atonement as a manifestation of the Redeemer's holiness. One in the form of God stooped to die. He was not a substituted victim offered on Calvary by whom selfish men might gain salvation. Christ's obedience to God and his love for man enter into the worth of his sacrifice. When we appreciate this and appropriate it, that is faith. It is the faith that saves.

IV. The purpose of God's love is eternal life. This expression, "eternal life," though found in the other Gospels (Matt. 19:16) and in the letters of Paul (Rom. 2:7), is especially characteristic of John. It is that state of blissful communion with God which is enjoyed by the believer who is reconciled to God through faith in Christ. The New Testament generally speaks of it as a future possession, but John often regards it as possessed already to some extent in this world. The literal meaning of "eternal" is "endless"; but it also means "belonging to the world to come," and so "supernatural," "spiritual," "heavenly."

The state of blessed communion with God is not dependent upon outward circumstances, but sustains the believer amid all the changes and chances of the days of our years. When everything else fails, we have this precious possession, priceless above wealth, fame, and power. All these are fickle; we depend upon them for security, and they fail; but in Christ we enjoy the privilege of communion with God, which no one can take away, but which becomes richer as the days go by.

Let no one think that the love of God is limited. It is measureless. The heart of the Eternal takes everyone in, for he gave up the best he had, even his own Son. Could he have done any more for men? How could he have loved them more? All this he did that whosoever believeth on Christ might have eternal life. Faith calls for an appreciation of the ethical value of our Lord's atoning work in the plan of salvation. God offers selfish, unappreciative men no pardon for which they have no real regard. But all who realize the worth of the sacrifice of Christ will gain entrance to the presence of God and enjoy him now and always.

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

Broadening Christian Horizons: The Antioch Movement.

LESSON: Acts 11:19-30.

GOLDEN TEXT: "For I am not ashamed of the Gospel: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek." Romans 1:16.

DEVOTIONAL READING: I Thessalonians 5:12-22.

INTER. & SR. TOPIC: A Nickname Becomes Honorable.

Y. P. & ADULTS: Living Up to Our Christian Name.

The Church was growing rapidly and was enabled to face enormous difficulties that would stun many large churches today. The secret of the success of the early Church lay in at least three qualities which it possessed, enterprise, undaunted purpose, and a prevailing and persistent spirit of evangelism. "The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church." Persecutions resulted in scattering the converts and spreading the fire of evangelism. Many found their way to Antioch. The zeal of their preaching was rewarded and multitudes turned to the new religion. It was necessary that they be instructed and trained in the Christian life and faith. Barnabas, the liberal-minded Jewish Christian, whose gift of a field to the young Church in Jerusalem seems to have been the inspiration to large giving among the Jewish Christians there, was selected as the man to go to Antioch. Barnabas was "full of the Holy Spirit and of faith."

Feeling himself unable adequately to meet the situation at Antioch he goes to Tarsus to seek Saul. He brings Saul to Antioch to help in the great work. It is a wise leader who knows when to call in expert help.

This Antioch movement was one of the most important in the history of the early Church, a world-wide Church, including all races, conditions, degrees of men. The Church was filled with the Spirit. It was unworldly. It was daily at work, No sacrifice was counted too great to be made for the furtherance of its life and testimony. The Church of that day went through the world with the open Bible in its hand and to the Book it made its constant appeal. It continually made public offer of Christ and redemption through His Name.

EVENING SERMON

THEME: ***Love's Last Call.***

W. FRANKLIN HARKEY, D. D.

TEXT: "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." Rev. 22:17.

This gracious invitation bears the marks of urgency and earnestness. It sounds as though it might have issued from a quiet church on a peaceful Sabbath morning. Just the opposite is true as we catch the significant back ground from which it comes. The times were out of joint. The world had gone wrong. Right was being snuffed out, and evil was being glorified. Dark clouds of persecution were everywhere. Unrest and disquiet abounded on all sides. It was not a propitious time for issuing a call to come to Christ.

In fact, as we study the times from which we get this message we see the Beloved disciple banished to the lonely isle of Patmos. It is from that very prison that John is moved by the Holy Spirit to send out a call for men to turn unto God. Periods like that in which John found himself have often been the forerunners of great awakenings for the church of Christ. When men's minds are frustrated, when the forces of evil have done their worst, and when every course of life has proven futile,—it is in such times that men often turn unto God.

Let no one despair of the times in which we live. With the world turned topsy-turvy, and sin doing its utmost, and the utter failure of force to find a way of peace, may we not be ready for a renewed call to the Christian way of life? An examination of God's call is always timely. When everything is lost, from the human standpoint, and the dark clouds of evil cover the earth, even in such an hour Love will issue one more call. As one of the old saints wrote, "As long as the light holds out to burn, the vilest sinner may return."

A Gracious Invitation.

The call of the Gospel is, Come. Here the invitation is reinforced by the Spirit and the churches. Jesus was always extending that invitation to all who felt in their souls a thirst for the things which the world could not supply. With a desire that all men might come to know Him in the fulness of His love He exclaimed, "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

A loving God has ever been extending this gracious invitation to wayward and sinful men. Isaiah is very bold when he extends this invitation, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price."

The need for that call is apparent in the moment in which we live. There is nothing that can take the place of this invitation. The world still rejects Jesus. We refuse to have Him reign over us, and yet His gracious invitation abides. The indictment of Studdert Kennedy is apropos of our generation,

"they simply passed Him by,
They never hurt a hair of Him, they only let Him die;
For men had grown more tender, and they would not give Him pain,
They only just passed down the street, and left Him in the rain.
Still Jesus cried, 'Forgive them, for they know not what they do,'
And still it rained the winter rain that drenched Him through and through;
The crowd went home and left the streets without a soul to see,
And Jesus crouched against a wall and cried for Calvary."

The follower of Christ must not forget the imperative which is placed upon him. A thirsting world that seeks its water from broken cisterns needs the invitation extended to drink of living water. How shall men know the way of life unless they be taught?

Those Who Are Back of the Call.

On a close study of this love call one discovers the persons who are back of it. On the receipt of an invitation our keenest interest is in the persons

who were responsible for it. Who is back of the invitation, and what is the motive back of the call? With these questions we can examine this call?

Insofar as we can see all heaven is back of this invitation. Apparently the writer of the last book of the Bible felt that the time was short. The hour was at hand. He sends forth this love call in the very niche of time. That has always been true of the Gospel. Time is fleeting. It is now time to be reconciled to God. "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation."

The Holy Spirit extends the invitation. Back of the Holy Spirit is God the Father. The Holy Spirit came at Pentecost and revived the drooping spirits of the disciples. He has often refreshed the Church of Christ. He illuminates and guides, and above all reveals Christ as Lord and Master. Christ is the "Bride." He is the fountain of all light, "the bright and morning Star."

Earth, too, is interested in extending this call for men to repent and come to new life. "And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." That has ever been the way by which the Gospel story spread, one heart warms another heart. There is a call for those who have received the glad tidings of salvation not only to live the truth as it has been revealed in Jesus, but to propagate it. Our times have witnessed the mighty evil of propaganda, false, misleading and destructive. Men's minds are swayed this way and that, until like the trees of the forest opinions are moved to and fro. The world will continue in the darkness of doubt and fear until we become positive crusaders for Christ. Christians everywhere have the opportunity to witness to the saving and keeping power of Christ.

Glorious Results in Accepting the Call.

There is a potent fact facing the world at the moment. Outside of Jesus Christ, men nowhere are satisfied. There is no peace. Sin still holds the world in its grip. Men need the power to break with sin. Men seek a way of escape. In the Middle Ages there were those who sought through monasticism to escape from the world. But they were still faced by realities. The world is still faced with the question, "What shall I do with Jesus?" He is still a disturbing factor.

Acceptance of the Gospel invitation brings salvation. Deliverance from sin and its power come through responding to this love call. There is the assurance of forgiveness now. The desire for a faith to live by is realized in Jesus. Religion after all is something to live by as well as to die by. When men answer this call a new life is opened, and new forces come to dominate the life. Selfishness is turned into unselfishness, and the spirit of love covers all the actions. We can meet life's tasks and bear life's burdens in the strength of this new relationship.

The hope of the world rests in Jesus Christ. We may be ready to despair when we have rejected Him. For the individual life and for collective life the hope lies through Christ. If we want individual life to be pure and honest, fellowship with Christ is essential. If we want the national structure to be sound and strong and permanent, we must build Christ into our laws, into the administration of our laws and into our treaties.

The late Edwin Markham was not more prophetic in any of his writing than in his poem:

The Desire of All Nations

And when he comes into the world gone wrong,
He will rebuild her beauty with a song.
To every heart he will its own dream be;
One moon has many phantoms in the sea.
Out of the North the norns will cry to men,
'Balder the Beautiful has come again!'
The flutes of Greece will whisper from the dead,
'Apollo has unveiled his sunbright head!'
The stones of Thebes and Memphis will find voice,
'Osiris comes! O tribes of Time, rejoice!'
And social architects who build the State,
Serving the dream at citadel and gate,
Will hail him coming through the labor hum.
And glad, quick cries will go from man to man,
'Lo, he has come, our Christ, the Artizan—
The King who loved the lilies, he has come!'

MID-WEEK SERMON

THEME: ***The Inexhaustible God.***

TEXT: Exodus 3:14.

Evil rampant. Hearts sinking. God has not forgotten man, but man has neglected God. We need to turn to him.

God and a Troubled World: Much hasty and incomplete thinking. Watching establishment of world order based on treachery and murder. Very real, but not first time world has faced such. History a narrative of strife between good and evil. Always evil men have sought to dominate and always good men have fought to save. Many times evil has seemed to be conquering, to be triumphant. But God works out his purposes. The priests stopped Jesus, as they thought, but he has survived destruction of Jerusalem, fall of Roman Empire, and will survive crash of other empires.

The Man and the Vision: Here is a very old story of an ambitious man who had been crushed and was eating out his heart in lonely shepherding. He had a vision of God, living and powerful, and in strength of that vision returned to Egypt with power to face and overcome the Pharaoh. He led his people in the Exodus, through the desert, and towards conquest. His secret was an assurance of the presence and power of God: "The goodwill of him that dwelt in the Bush." He served God faithfully and he found God adequate.

The Inexhaustible God: Let the scholars settle the root and meaning of the Holy Name. It brought to Moses: (1) An assurance of permanence. Moses' world had toppled about his ears. Life was ruined. His answer in the word of God: v. 15. Moses knew himself passing and inadequate. God was abiding and inexhaustible. (2) A revelation of purity. Elements of permanence outside range of material things. Too often our trust is in material

things. But permanence is of the spirit, and to endure the spirit must be pure. (3) Demonstration of inexhaustible personal power. God is power, personal and inexhaustible. "I have visited—seen—will bring out." (4) A word of infinite grace. God stoops to our weakness. Men of every generation have craved this message. God has sent it to every generation. Christ's word to us: "God has not given you up!" But we must honor and obey him.

TOPICS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE'S SOCIETIES

CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR: Y. P.—May Topic, Torchbearers of Christianity. Peter, the Rock. John 1:35-42.
Jr.—May Topic. Improving Our Work. Which was our Best Meeting? Col. 3:14-17.
LUTHER LEAGUE: Sr.—Whitsunday. The Holy Spirit in Our Lives. Acts 2:16-18.
Y. P.—Same.
Inter.—Same.
WALTHER LEAGUE: June Topic—Your Family Altar. What is our solution? The Background—the Home.

FOR THE BULLETIN BOARD

Seeking happiness it flees you.
At least they are not using poisoned gas.
Knowing war they love peace.
Either the Golden Rule or the Rule of Gold. Never both.
Thanksgiving is a faith that has received.
Nowhere is inspired common sense so common or literal as in the Bible.
Individual peace presupposes self respect.
The best folks you meet leave you looking up, not down.
Once the soul sings it will know no lack of song.
What will your harvest be?

JUNE, SECOND SUNDAY

CALL TO WORSHIP: "Praise waiteth for Thee, O God, in Zion; and unto Thee shalt the vow be performed."
PSALM: 148.
PRELUDE: Distant Chimes—*Shackley.*
ANTHEM: How Lovely Are Thy Dwellings—*Hadley.*
OFFERTORY: Meditation—*D'Evry.*
POSTLUDE: March in B Flat—*Duncan.*
OFFERTORY SENTENCE: "The needy shall not always be forgotten. Nor the expectation of the poor perish forever." Ps. 9.
OFFERTORY PRAYER: We thank Thee for the privilege given us to bring our offerings to Thee, because Thy guidance is needed in distributing that which Thou hast bestowed so generously. That which Thou hast placed in our keeping is increased according to our faith in Thee, and our response to Thy love and wisdom. Accept our love with the offering, and direct us further in Thy way.
BENEDICTION: Now may our God and Father Himself, and our Lord Jesus, direct our way unto you, and the Lord make you to increase and abound in love toward one another.

SERMONS

THEME: *The Centrality of God (Commencement).*

G. WILSON COLE, D. D.

TEXT: "I saw the Lord, high and lifted up, and His train filled the temple." Isa. 6:1.
HYMNS: "Come thou almighty king."—*Italian Hymn,* 664, 6664.
"Holy, Holy, Holy Lord."—*Athanasius,* 77, 77, 77.

Religion has many privileges and obligations, many corollaries and conclusions, but the heart of it all is God. If any group, in the name of religion, loses the central foundational fact and experience of God, they have lost religion. The creator of personality, who has made the human mind capable of converse with himself, may be lost in more than obvious evil ways of man. You lose God when you take any good cause and make it the final goal and objective of living.

A few years ago God was lost in the social hope of Christians. All that was needed was a reconstructed society so arranged as to eliminate poverty and wealth and make all men brothers in a common family. The best leadership in religious thought, before the World War, drifted from what was considered theory and sentiment about God, and sought to live beside the road and be a friend to man. All the hopes of social salvation, by a changed society, crashed into ruins with the revolution in Russia, the catastrophe in Europe, and the collapse of the economic system in America. The final shovel of dirt was thrown on the buried hope in the debacle of Munich.

The Church and leaders in religion have learned their lesson. The conviction of the foundational reality of God may have been bought at the great price of lost hopes from inadequate religious programs and policies, but the possession of this basic faith is worth all that it cost. For the Church now has the message that meets the heart hunger of mankind, a hunger that could never be satisfied with endless sectarian antagonisms and secular schemes for the reconstruction of society. The storms of crises have cleared the sky of earth-born panaceas and let the face of God shine through and

flood-light the pathway of men. We need to pause reverently and long enough to say "I saw the Lord, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple," then tell the world.

This renewal of personal God-relationship, or increase of God-awareness, cannot be accomplished by proxy. The Negro spiritual puts this inescapable obligation in the song "It's me, O Lord, standing in the need of prayer. It's not my mother, nor my father—look, Lord, it's me. It's not the preacher nor the elder—the Official Board nor the Woman's Association—Look Lord, it's me." No one for you can make the contact with God that is your inalienable right and coercive duty. One by one we come into the world. Singly we go out. And individually we must come to God, believe in Him, know Him for ourself." The revival of religion for our day does not depend on propaganda and mass movement but the children of the earth, singly, making their way to the house of God, and each seeing for himself the "Lord high and lifted up."

When we climb to this vision of God for ourselves, what do we see? I cannot say for you all that is implied in that awakening sight, but I can tell at least part of what it means from what I see:

I. I see a God of Wisdom and Power Controlling and Directing the Forces of Nature. All the machinations and destructions of all the armies and navies of our earth is but the foot marks of a fly compared to the myriad insignia of a governing God, who makes the sun to shine by day and the moon and stars by night, and endlessly operates the laws of mechanism of the universe and growth of the earth. The whole story of war and ill-will, and man's inhumanity to man is but the insane foot notes of diverting creatures at the bottom of pages of giant volumes written by God in controlling, directing, and developing the resources of nature.

If the news comes to me sometime that water does not flow downward, that heavy bodies fall upward, that seeds no longer break through rich soil to new life, that grass withers and dies under rain and sunlight, that the earth has rebelled and parted from the family of planets, that birds crawl and worms fly, and all the laws of the universe have been abrogated, then I shall fear, and mourn, and lose hope. For then I know God is no more, and an insane monster dictator is on the throne of the universe. But up to this time, there has been no slight sign of the coming of such a tragedy at the heart of the universe. I see the Lord, high and lifted up, still on the throne. So, if you don't mind, Mr. Hitler, Mr. Mussolini, I will go to bed tonight and sleep. You may drop a bomb with poison gas into my bed room, but you see God and my soul are not subject to destruction by mechanical and biological disintegration.

"Be still, my soul: thy God doth undertake
To guide the future as He has the past.
Thy hope, thy confidence let nothing shake;
All now mysterious shall be bright at last.
Be still, my soul: the waves and winds still know
His voice who ruled them while He dwelt below."

II. I see the Unfailing Justice of an Omnipotent God.

Much of the tragedy of men comes from the fatuous stupidity of thinking they can be exceptions to God's scheme of retribution. They believe in the laws of science, the mastery of psychology, the control of natural resources. But they also believe that this acquired knowledge gives them the right and power to use material and mental weapons to gain desired objectives out of harmony with God's will in the universe.

What we must understand when we play unfairly with our fellowmen, when we discard the golden rule and seize what does not justly belong to us, is that we are not dealing with poor, ignorant, helpless creatures. We are dealing with God. The people who treat human lives badly are blind and dumb or they would be trembling with fear.

Many people in our world and especially the Nazis of Germany and the Communists of Russia escape this feeling of fear of God by issuing an edict, a communique, "The Lord of the Old and the New Testament has been slain"—that they have surrounded his stronghold, and dropped bombs on his dwelling, just as the lightning storm-troops smashed through Poland, and Italian and German troops have destroyed the Republic of Spain, Czecho-Slovakia and Austria.

We need to know that the leaders of the Nazi State are arrayed against Christianity. Rev. Charles E. MacFarland, General Secretary Emeritus of the Federal Council of Churches, is not a wild proponent of England and France when he writes in the Mercury on "Hitler and Christ." His quotations are directly from the utterances of those in authority in Germany. And if what he says is true, the success of Nazism is the death of Christianity in Germany or wherever the Germans rule. Heinrich Himmler refers to Christ as the "Pale Figure on the Cross, whose passivity and emphasized mien of suffering expresses only humility and self abnegation, qualities which we, conscious of our heroic blood, utterly deny . . . the corruption of our blood caused by the intrusion of this alien philosophy must be ended." That is the spirit and purpose of Nazism.

But they have read only part of the meaning of that Pale Figure. They forget that he said "If any one harm one of my little ones, it would be better if a mill stone were hung around his neck, and cast into the sea." It is sheer fool-hardiness to fight God. Yet part of our world drives ahead with their inhuman and ungodly plans as though God were ill, or that he had turned into a grandmotherly pacifist, or injured his arm of retribution.

The train of the Lord fills all the temple of the earth, and no escape is left to the sons of men who will hurt their brothers. Sooner or later—but inevitably—the scales must balance. For I saw the Righteous Lord, high and lifted up and I noted that all his judgments are true. The mills of God grind slowly, but they grind exceedingly fine.

Why should anyone who sees God apologize and cringe before the predatory powers of ungodly men? Trust in God.

III. I see the Ceaseless Love of a Personal God.

God who made the seed to grow, who made the flower to open to sunlight, also made mothers and fathers to love, made brothers in trouble to weep for

one another, made great minds to feel the pain in alien bosoms, made social passion to course through the veins of martyred saints. He has not changed those creations. When war and greed and brutishness have stamped under foot the bodies of helpless women and children, those who remain will begin to build again on the ruins of man's sin the citadel of human love. Because God is at the center of life, love will never be crushed out of the human heart.

Then do not lose heart. God is still at the center of the universe. He governs nature,—enjoy it. He punishes the evil purposed—be afraid to do wrong. He loves, they love without ceasing.

Trinity Sunday.

THEME: *How Can We Know God.*

CHARLES F. BANNING, D. D.

TEXT: "I saw the Lord." Isa. 6:1.
HYMNS: "Lord with glowing Heart . . ."—*Sanctuary*, 87, 87, *D*.
"Shine Thou upon us, Lord."—*Blessed Home*, 66, 66, *D*.

Dr. Joseph Robbins was on a train going to New York and a New York City business man sat down beside him and said, "You are a minister, are you not? Then tell me what you know about God. I need him." When I heard that story I thought of Job who cried, "Oh that I knew where I might find Him," and Phillip who said to Jesus, "Show us the Father and we will be satisfied."

Today in almost every newspaper or magazine you read, and often over the radio, you hear an appeal back to religion. This all means that we are trying to find God because, unless we know God, prayer, immortality and the Bible are meaningless to us. I am convinced that the hunger of the human heart today is that it yearns to know God. So this morning we are not concerned about the existence of God, we are confident of that. We are not going to ask about the nature of God. Jesus tells us what he is like. Our question is How can we become personally acquainted with Him? How can God become a personal experience to each one of us?

We are a people who have confused material prosperity and religion. We boast of our progress. We say this is God's country. In 1929 when things began to happen to our prosperity and ten years later when Europe was plunged into war, and now that America feels that the war may touch her, will people realize that material prosperity and religion are not the same? Democracy is in danger, family life is decaying, social problems face us which we realize are too much for our human resources. We are not sneering about it today. We want to know God as a source of strength, security and hope. So, may I make some suggestions to you as to the technique for finding and knowing God as a personal friend.

May I suggest first that you examine your own life. You cannot get a program over your radio if your instrument is out of tune or if one of its tubes is burnt out. Jesus said, "Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God." If there is something in your life that you know ought not to be there, deal with that first.

Examine your motives. Why do you want to know God? Is it out of curiosity? Is it that you want something you cannot get otherwise? Is it that you want the power of God for your own use? Or do you want to know God in order that you may cooperate with him better? Do you want the power of God to flow through you and into the lives of others? Do you want to know him better in order that you may help him build the Kingdom? Do you want God to use you or just to give you something? Put all self-seeking aside, realize that if you come to know him it will cost you something.

God is at work in human history. The materialist says that history is a meaningless mass of unconnected events. The humanist says history is only a biological process. An ancient interpretation of history revised by Nietzsche and Spengler is that history is the futile cycle of birth and death. Individuals and civilizations are born, live a brief span and die and that history is but an endless repetition of that cycle.

Neither can Christians have any part with the modern theory that God is not concerned with history. We cannot believe that human tears and tragedy are ignored by God. Human history is the theatre of creative power. It is the stage on which is being worked out the conflict between human and divine will. It is the arena where character is being developed, and where God is keeping watch above his own. God is concerned. God is aware. God sent his Son. God built an institution, the church, and God has made all his laws to favor those who cooperate with him in his Holy purpose.

The student of history will see God at work drawing out of the ashes of ruin a remnant of fine gold. The Babylonian captivity was a tragedy but out of the ashes God drew a remnant that rebuilt Israel on a firmer foundation. The persecution of the early Christians was a tragedy but the blood of the martyrs was the seed of the church. God is never in a hurry and he is never defeated. If you will look for him you will see him at work in history.

It is in the realm of personal experience that we want to know him and there are four ways in which individuals come to a personal knowledge and experience of God.

There are those who find him in the time-honored practices of the church. Isaiah was in the temple when he saw the Lord, high and lifted up. The Psalmist said he was misled by the apparent prosperity of the wicked until he went into the sanctuary and then he understood. In the Roman Catholic church the crucifix and mass are means by which people come into relationship with God. In the singing of a hymn, in the music of the organ, in the act of united worship, many come to know God.

There are those who find God through study. They want a book that will help them think it through. There are not many such people but there are a few. One does not usually fall in love by reading a book on courtship and marriage. Here is where many people are confused. They have read too much. Isaiah would never have found God through reason. Many people add to their own confusion and doubt if they continue to read. Last summer I was talking to Muriel Lester, the great woman preacher of England. She was enthusiastic about a little book which she had read

recently. It was Stern's book entitled "Prayer and Worship." She said it had helped her more than anything she had ever found in her life. I had read the same book and it did not mean much to me. So, while some people may find God through reason, through the reading of books, many others will be confused by their much reading.

There are some mystically minded people who find him through quiet meditation and prayer. Do you remember that scene in the book by Lloyd C. Douglas, "The Green Light," when the Dean used to have his attendants wheel him into the chapel every morning where he spent an hour in meditation and prayer. Here was a mystic for whom God seemed to break through in quiet meditation and prayer. There are times when ten minutes alone in this auditorium does more for my soul than all the books I could read. We are a hurried people. We are busy from morning to night. Probably one reason why we have lost the sense of God out of our life is that we are not taking time for quiet meditation and prayer.

Then again there are those who find God in some form of active service, in obedience to duty. Saul of Tarsus was doing what he thought was his duty when God appealed to him. Many people feel that when they are doing the will of God they feel the presence of God. A young man I know took a Christmas basket and some clothing to a poor family. He left some of his own money with them for medicine and milk for a sick child. As he left that room he said he felt that he was in the presence of God more than he had ever been in his life. Another young man was troubled by doubts. I asked him to do some work in the church. A few weeks later he told me that all his doubts had cleared up. So there are some who through the active doing of the will of God feel the active presence of God in their lives.

I do not mean that any person is one type exclusively. There are times when a good book means more to us than quiet meditation. Again there are days when the giving of a cup of cold water in his name brings us close to him. What I do mean is that we must not stop our search if we do not have the same experience that another has had. Last November our son, Charles, took the train for Texas. He had not been on a train since he was eight years of age. He knew nothing about train travel. He asked me many questions. Can you see out of the car as you go along? How do you get your meals? Where can you get a drink of water? Then he got on the train and learned for himself. So we may learn much from the experience of others but in the end it must be our own experience. He that seeketh findeth. Try all of these paths and find the one that is best for you. Do not give up if you try once or twice and nothing happens. Remember the promise "Ye shall seek me and ye shall find me when ye search for me with your whole heart."

Suppose I want to know God. I read what he has written, the Bible. I read or talk with others who know him. I hear sermons on prayer and communion. I listen to a preacher tell how he found God. Then, if I care enough, if I am willing to pay the price, then I spend some time on my own quest. I begin to engage in corporate worship in the church. I am there to worship, to exhalt him, to learn to know God better. Then I go home, I get my New Testament and sit down alone and read, perhaps the Sermon

on the Mount. Then I meditate on what I have read and ask God to show me something he wants me to do. Then I find some cause or person in need and make a very definite sacrifice. I give something to God to show him that I love him and that I want to know him better, rather than just ask for something for myself. I would not expect anything to happen in a day or perhaps a week. But I know from personal experience that if anyone will enter such a quest, will share the fellowship of study, the fellowship of prayer and the fellowship of sacrifice, earnestly, quietly and persistently, God will not fail them.

I would remind you also that this is not a one-way search. To have any reception in your radio there must be transmission. Here is my poverty reaching out and there is God's wealth reaching out to me. Here is my ignorance and there is God's truth, my sin and his forgiveness, my loneliness and his love, my trouble and his comfort, my fear and his assurance, my war and his peace. God is anxious to reveal himself to us. He said, "Behold I stand at the door and knock. If any man will open the door, I will come in."

Do not search for God unless you are willing for him to change you, unless you want your life to grow, unless you want to be happier, more useful, more friendly, more Christ-like. Do not search for God unless you are willing to follow wherever he leads, do what he asks, take what he gives. If you are not willing, he knows and nothing will come of your search. It may cost you something but oh how much richer your life will be. If you find Him, no matter what you lose, you will have everything. If you do not find God, no matter what you gain, you will lose everything.

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

Beginning of World Missions.

LESSON: Acts 12:25—13:12.

GOLDEN TEXT: "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to the whole creation." Mark 16:15.

DEVOTIONAL READING: Psalm 72:6-13.

INTER. & SR. TOPIC: Pioneers in World Missions.

Y. P. & ADULTS: The Holy Spirit in World Missions.

Paul's first missionary journey began in the year 47 A.D. The places mentioned in the Bible are Antioch and Cyprus, the cities of Salamis on the east coast and Pathos on the west coast.

It is significant that the missionary enterprise of the Church had its beginning at Antioch. The Church there was composed of a large body of Christians who had been formed by the two most powerful evangelists and efficient organizers the world has ever known. The Church was united, zealous for Christianity, and was an ideal missionary center. Paul and Barnabas had done their work well there and the Church at Antioch was on fire with missionary zeal, one of the prime factors in its marvelous growth. There came a time, however, in the Middle Ages when the missionary zeal

of the Church was almost absent. It was not until late in the eighteenth century and early nineteenth that the Church began again to awaken to its missionary responsibility and opportunity.

Insist upon the absolute necessity of the missionary enterprise for the life of the Church. Read McAfee's "Foreign Missions," in order to be able to answer the many objections which are today offered.

Paul won his first recorded converts by means of a miracle. Modern missionaries often use the marvels of science as means to arouse interest and win a way for the Gospel. Medical missions is one of the noblest forms that the missionary enterprise takes. Ministering to the needs of the body, opportunity is gained to present Christ to answer the needs of the soul. The stereopticon and the moving picture prove mighty agencies in opening doors for Christ. The resources of Christian missions are constantly enlarged. Their methods are vastly enriched while their central aim remains the same, the winning of men and women through the power and presence of the Holy Spirit to a belief in an acceptance of Jesus Christ as Lord and Master of life.

EVENING SERMON

THEME: *"Religion of the Spirit."*

FRANCIS C. VIELE, D. D.

TEXT: Romans 2:29.
HYMNS: "The Lord my Shepherd is."—*Dedication, S. M.*
"O that the Lord would Guide my ways."—*Evans, C. M.*

There is no problem that is without a solution. There is no question that is not answerable in the light of faith. There is no burden that cannot be carried in the strength of eternal hope. And yet the problems and questions and burdens of life are crushing the lives of more people than at any other point of history. The fact that this is no more than an academic pronouncement with so many people, the spirit of pessimism is threatening the destruction of some of the finest achievements of human genius. This is attributable to the quite prevalent disposition of men to take things into their own hands and consult nothing but their own judgment.

Formal Acknowledgment.

Much is being said on the subject of religion. Men are beginning to realize the recognition that should be accorded religious ideals. It is generally conceded to be impossible to find the way out of the present difficulties without encouraging and invoking the office-work of religion. There seems to be an increasing desire to acknowledge indebtedness to life's essential moral values. This may be known as a rift in the threatening cloud of discouragement. But if nothing more than formal acknowledgment is done about it, definitely coveted results will remain an unknown factor.

Not a little of print, dealing with the subject of religion is unworthy of a permanent place. This is due to the lack of a specific object revealed by those who express their ideas concerning a theme that is universal in the sweep of its influence. It is not so much what is said about religion as what

is done with religious beliefs that will lead the world to the larger spheres of aspiration and accomplishment. All who master the lessons of practical import are making themselves of indispensable value to their fellowmen.

Theory.

Too many who are taking part in the religious discussions of our time confine their meditations to the sphere of theory. It is true that theory has an important place in some departments of investigation, but it has no essential relation to the Christian religion in its application to life. The meaning of religion and its place in life does not demand investigation to prove its practicability. All that needs to be done is to acknowledge our indebtedness to Christ and make his perfected plan of redemption the working rule of our everyday activities. The contribution that Christianity has made to the moral enrichment of life is patent to all who are conversant with the records of history. With the coming of Christ and the introduction of Christian ideals, man's salvation was divorced from all need of theoretical experiments. The invaluable influence of this fact is a matter of record.

In all the teachings of Jesus there is nothing that can be associated with a theoretical proposition. All that he announced to the world is plainly indispensable in the solution of life's interminable array of problems. Whatever there is in life that remains untouched by the beneficent influences of Christian doctrine is due only to man's failure to follow the directing authority of Christ's teachings. It is imperative for man to recognize that the gospel has nothing to do with human estimation, but there are almost countless numbers of people who believe differently. And it is this belief about the nature of religion that has contributed so largely toward creating the liberalizing concepts of moral obligations.

Failure.

All the changes that have been effected in human relationships which have improved the status of society are directly traceable to the willingness of man to subscribe to the laws of God. We are told, however, that this idea depends upon the individual viewpoint of life. But something more far-reaching in its nature is involved in all that is generally recognized as modern progress. Some things that are called advanced steps in the art of living do not belong in the category of mere human appraisal. And it is at this point of observation where are found evidences of our failure correctly to classify life's various relationships. There is as much difference in the value of human activities as there is between wisdom and knowledge. Some of the best informed men of the ages have been unwise in the use made of their knowledge. And this thought is especially applicable to many in our day who are thinking of religion only in terms of social service. This may be called the mechanics of religion or the religion of social action, but falls woefully short of covering the ground of our obligations as the representatives of Christ.

This is due to the determination to deal with all such matters in our own way. We refuse to pay the price for getting the most out of spiritual realities. The religion of the spirit does not appeal to people whose interests

JUNE, THIRD SUNDAY

CALL TO WORSHIP: "Arise and go down to the potter's house, and there will I cause thee to hear My words."
PSALM: 111.
PRELUDE: In Springtime—*Kinder.*
ANTHEM: O Holy, Holy, Holy Lord—*Buck.*
OFFERTORY: Stillness of Night—*Chubb.*
POSTLUDE: March—*Petrali.*
OFFERTORY SENTENCE: "And they that know Thy name will put their trust in Thee; for Thou, Jehovah, hast not forsaken them that seek Thee."
OFFERTORY PRAYER: Only Thou, our Heavenly Father, knowest for what purpose we offer our tithe to Thee, and we pray Thee in the name of Thy Son, Jesus Christ, to use our gifts for that which is comely in Thy sight.
BENEDICTION: Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing that ye may abound in hope, in the power of the Holy Spirit.

SERMONS

THEME: *An Ear For God.*

TEUNIS E. GOUWENS, D. D.

TEXT: "I will hear what God the Lord will speak." Psalm 85:8.
HYMNS: O For a Heart to Praise My God."—*Winchester, C. M.*
"Hark! a Thrilling Voice is Sounding."—*Merton,* 87, 87.

Here is a resolution whose wisdom no sincere man can question. Whatever sort of difficulty a man may encounter, the thing that matters most is the will of God. No experience is truly and fully interpreted until it is seen from the divine point of view. We cannot safely get along without our sensitiveness to the voice of the Eternal. What the psalmist did, the saints of the centuries have done, and we can do today. We can say, "I will hear what God the Lord will speak." We can incline our ear to the God of our fathers.

Life has become so complex and varied in our day that almost any verdict on it can be substantiated with an impressive body of evidence. Nevertheless, there are tendencies which no observer can entirely overlook. There are features of our age which present themselves to some degree in every human being. There are qualities of modern life to which not one of us is wholly stranger.

We are restless. Multitudes throughout the world have forgotten how to rest. And the agitation which prevails is particularly evident in our own land. Americans have always been notable for their energy and dash. The oriental knows how to meditate; the occidental knows how to manipulate. And of all the western countries our own is the most devoted to the god of things practical. We are too fidgety to "wait" on the Lord.

We are bewildered. Our fathers knew what they believed, but we are not so sure. Biology, psychology and religion each have their own accounts of man and his destiny. Scientists, philosophers and theologians present a mass of information and speculation concerning the universe which no man can harmonize. Biographers and historians record events but the interpretations of no two are alike. And it is not strange that the ambiguity which prevails elsewhere is felt in the realm of religion too.

Not only our beliefs, but our impulses, our desires, our likes and dislikes, our judgments of value and our purposes are likewise in almost perpetual conflict. Every day and every hour we are compelled to pick our way as correctly and as honorably as we can through a labyrinth which baffles the wisdom of the wisest.

Our life is shallow. Most of us live very near the surface. Once in a while something happens to every soul to plunge it into the depths. Such an experience has in it stupendous possibilities for enrichment. But it always involves risk and almost invariably its pain is excruciating. We feel more confident in the shallows where we cannot be overwhelmed. This superficiality is evident in the readiness with which vast multitudes are swayed by enticing catchwords, in the frivolity of the entertainment to which they flee for diversion and in the trashy output of the modern press. Multitudes today are feeding their bodies with legitimate bread but their souls with sawdust. They are living on the surface and are unaware, though they will learn it later, that they are "wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked."

No honest human being will contend that he enjoys the peace of soul and enrichment of life of which he feels himself capable. The situation is grave and we do well to ask whether or not the secularism of our day has become so pervasive and dominant that the spirit of man must be lost in it.

Are we to be dominated by the material environment we have thrown around ourselves, or are we going to control that environment and use it in such a way as shall result in the enrichment of our personalities? Are we going to let the strident noises of our day command our attention, or are we going to make some adequate provision for listening to that still small voice which speaks of higher things? Are we going to forget the purpose of our travel, or are we going to make sure, first of all, of our destination? Are we going to permit our lives to be cluttered with things, or are we going to govern our contacts with things by an appreciation of the true values of life? Are we going to allow our lives to exhaust themselves in superficial activities, or are we going to penetrate to the inner shrines where the spirit of man meets the Spirit of God? Such questions concern every soul, for whatever our present state may be, it is still true that we were made in the image of God.

Centuries upon centuries ago, the psalmist exclaimed, "I am fearfully and wonderfully made." All the succeeding ages have confirmed the truth of this statement, and still for every thinking man the amazement grows. "God created man in his own image." When will the full significance of this astounding truth be known?

Our own inner life falls far short of that ideal to which God in Christ asks us to aspire. The ever-ascending, elusive ideal does not betray the soul. It is, in fact, the only thing that deserves the attention of the human spirit. It is the only thing that can develop the capacities and talents with which God endowed it. The ideal reminds the human heart of its capacity for life and assures it that the life of which it is capable is available.

We are unhappy, confused, superficial and weary because we seek satisfaction and strength in things which cannot supply them. The ancient prophet called attention to this truth when he exclaimed, "Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me." Every sincere sage of mankind

has seen that unrealized possibilities of amazing proportions stretched before the human soul.

Refer to the Bible and see how its heroes rise out of adverse conditions in response to the higher call. Ask them for the secret of their pre-eminent achievement in living and they will say that they hearkened to the voice of the Lord their God and gave ear to his commandments.

Not by lending an ear to the uncertain sayings of man, nor by reading the abundance of his writings, nor by drinking at the wells of his pleasure, nor by accumulating his gold, can the human soul be satisfied. The soul gives every evidence that it was made by God and for God and that therefore its high destiny can find fulfillment only as it learns to listen to the divine voice. That may sound vague and mystical. But let us not commit the folly of rejecting a thing as false simply because we fail to comprehend it.

The experience of Augustine was the experience of St. Theresa when she said, "When I am in prayer, the hearing alone is left!" When a man is so intent on catching a message from the Eternal that "hearing alone is left," he may not at once read the riddle of life nor escape its pain, but he is cultivating an insight into spiritual things which will fortify him against all adversity and open him to all enrichment.

The men and the women who listen to God hear things which turn sorrow into joy, weakness into strength, confusion into peace and the fear of dying into the hope of everlasting life. They become convinced of a divine accent in the word of the Psalmist when he said, "Be still, and know that I am God." They are persuaded that the prophet was passing on for our correction and encouragement a truth which he himself had heard from God when he said, "In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength." What a message that is for the weary, perplexed and disappointing life of our day!

But how shall we hear what God will speak? Let us not be too insistent on an exact schedule. Let us not be disappointed if we are unable to find a complete code of instructions. Let us not be discouraged if such methods as are recommended fail to bring the promised results. Surely let us avoid criticism of those whose custom varies from our own.

No two individuals pray in precisely the same way. Nor can any rigid rules be laid down which all must follow. The Master himself, the one who leads all mankind in the art and power of prayer, said, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth." The one whose heart was attuned to the voice of God, beyond all merely human appreciation of harmony, spent whole nights in prayer that he might comprehend the full significance of the Father's will. But he never outlined a set of conditions which, if any man observed, would guarantee the hearing and understanding of the voice of God. As though to emphasize the strictly personal element in prayer, he advised his followers to do their praying in the privacy of their own inner chambers; and as though to call attention to the difficulty of acquiring the art of listening, he urged them again and again to be persistent and never to faint.

But, though explicit instructions are not available, at least three things

may be mentioned as essential for listening to God. The first is *sincerity*. No man can play with this matter and succeed. No man can demand of God a demonstration and hope to get it. Those who hear the reproof and instruction and comfort they need are the ones who, in an unequal struggle with sin, in the pain of doubt, in the shadow of sorrow, or in some other intimate contact with the realities of life, are sobered into a receptive mood. We must begin by casting aside all sham, all pretense and all evasion. We can hope for nothing unless at the very start we are honest and earnest enough to pay attention. The first requirement for hearing God is that plain dealing which we call sincerity.

The second requirement is *relaxation* and *quiet*. Two things, we have been reminded since ancient times, are necessary for good agriculture. They are deep plowing and periods of fallowness. Constant cultivation of the soil will yield decreasing crops. Periods of rest are necessary. It is so in every department of life. It is so in religion. Those who thought they would be heard for their much speaking were wrong. They were wrong even in their estimate of the importance of being heard. The important thing in communion with God is not that we should be heard but that we should hear. And often our much speaking only closes our ears.

The proverb "Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise," needs to be offset in our day by the example of the bee of which Michael Fairless tells us.

> "A bee with laden honey-bag hummed and buzzed in the hedge as I got ready for work, importuning the flowers for that which he could not carry, and finally giving up the attempt in despair fell asleep in a buttercup, the best place for his weary little velvet body. In five minutes—they may have been five hours to him—he awoke a new bee, sensible and clear-sighted, and flew blithely away to the hive with his sufficiency—an example this weary world would be wise to follow."

The incessant drive and distraction and grasping eagerness of this world cannot be good for the soul. Somehow, if we would live, we must reclaim that hour of quiet and meditation in which the divine voice can be heard. Sometimes it takes misfortune to open the heart to the blessing of God's peace. "When I am sick," said one who had not prayed in vain, "I become conscious of the Infinite Mother in whose lap I lay my weary head." Milton, in his blindness, is represented as saying:

> "Give me now my lyre!
> I feel the stirrings of a gift divine:
> Within my bosom glows unearthly fire,
> Lit by no skill of mine."

What I am saying to you is drawn right out of the heart of human experience. You have felt it too. You know what it is to lie still and to hear a voice rebuking, inviting, pleading, comforting, a voice as melodious as it is authoritative and as familiar as it is strange, a voice which earth cannot explain and which bears the accents of heaven. You have heard it in the times of your quietness, the times of your withdrawal from the distracting world. Listen to it, my friend, it will feed and fortify your soul, for the things of which it speaks are excellent things.

The third essential for listening to God is a belief in the highest and best. Let us accept it as an axiom that when we are dealing with God nothing is too good to be true. The man who doubts the reality of beauty and the genuineness of goodness is not likely to attain a certainty of God. On the other hand, the man who goes through life with eyes open for beauty and with a soul appreciative of benevolence will become increasingly convinced that there is a God who supports these things with his eternal sanction.

Live in the upper regions of the soul and your faculties will be trained to listen to the supreme voice of the universe. The sounds may be uncertain at first but they will soon become as unmistakable as they are celestial. To change the figure, take this counsel of the poet:

"Keep thy soul's large window pure from wrong!"

The Lord reveals himself to those who set their minds on the things that are above where Christ is.

Consider what is the kindest thing you can do. Be assured that God wants you to do the kindest thing. Consider what is nearest the truth, what is purest, what is most valuable. Be assured that in these intimations of truth, purity and value God is speaking to your soul. Take the way which recommends itself to you as the best, and before you have gone very far you will be cheered by a firm conviction that the way you have chosen leads to God.

Many voices speak to us. In learning to listen to the highest we train ourselves to listen to the Eternal. And the highest of all is the Word made flesh, the first and final Word of God. He is mankind's transcendent teacher and what he spoke he had learned from the Father. Those who heard him and believed found themselves in the presence of God. And in that sacred presence their hearts were bathed in peace divine and they knew they had begun to live the life that satisfies forever. To us, as to his first friends, he says, "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear." And we respond, "I will—I will hear what God the Lord will speak."

First Sunday After Trinity.

THEME: *Tell Us Plainly.*

JOHN H. HANGAR.

SCRIPTURE: John 10:22-39.

TEXT: "How long dost thou hold us in suspense? If thou art the Christ tell us plainly. . . . I told you and you believed not." John 10:21.

HYMNS: "O Young And Fearless Prophet."—*Blairgowrie,* 13, 13, 13, 13.
In The Hour Of Trial.—*Penitence,* 6, 5, 6, 5, *D.*

Did you ever examine yourself to see how critical and doubtful you are of the goodness and the motives of men who do good? We so seldom credit the "good neighbor" with unselfish motives for his goodness. If he is kind and generous with others we feel that he has a motive other than goodness. If he is a politician honestly working for the public good, we believe he is doing it only to get votes. If we hear of a man who is generous in the giving of himself, his talents and his possessions, we unconsciously tell ourselves that he is doing it to make a name for himself or to make a big show.

Now, we must admit, of course, that we are often justified in questioning a man's motives. That seems to have been the attitude of the Jews who came to Jesus as he mingled with the crowd on Solomon's porch of the Temple. They saw Jesus going about doing good, giving of himself unstintingly to the needs of others. They saw him denying himself for the sake of perfect strangers, and so they asked him, "How long are you going to keep us in suspense? What is your game? Where do you come in, in all this?" "If thou art the Christ, tell us plainly. We are looking for a man called the Christ. If you are he, say so, and we'll follow you."

How many times in the history of the world men and women have shown themselves willing to follow a name, a name that may mean something to our ears but absolutely nothing to our reason. Have you ever heard of an individual introducing himself to a group with words like these, "My name is Smithers. I'm one of the Denver Smitherses." And have you ever seen such an individual get prominence in the group almost immediately? He has a name, and nothing else matters. He can drink coffee out of his saucer and eat peas with his knife and there are men and women who will still follow him. But if his name is just Smith and he comes from *Okahumpa,* no amount of good he may do will count in his favor with certain individuals.

Had Jesus said, "I am the Christ. Here is my family tree going back in the line of David. Here is a record of the various prophecies that I have fulfilled. Here are my credentials, signed, stamped and sealed in the presence of the Governor," he would have answered the question of certain of those Jews and would have had them as his followers. He could have done great things then. He could have had a political revolution which would have given Herod real cause to worry. He could have restored the throne of David in all its glory. He might have changed the politics of the world completely, but he would have done little toward changing the heart of the world.

Jesus did not want followers who were following a name, he wanted men and women who were willing to follow a great spirit. On several occasions, Jesus studiously avoided telling his listeners, "I am the Christ."

Had Jesus been more specific and definite our moral choices would be much simpler. Every minister who has the confidence of young people will have those young people coming to him repeatedly with specific questions of conduct, "What about drinking?" "What about gambling?" "What about cheating in school?" "What about petting?" "What about dancing?" Those questions would be perfectly easy if Jesus had "told us plainly."

But had Jesus yielded to such a request, two hardships would have been worked upon his followers. First of all, their gospel would have been outmoded very quickly, the social environment has changed so rapidly, new problems have appeared and old ones have disappeared so generally that even in Jesus' day He saw the legalistic religion of specific conduct, the religion of the Pharisees as altogether out of date.

This also would have happened had Jesus described Christian conduct plainly and specifically, his followers would have been robbed of all the possibilities of growth in Christian character. If all our choices were made for us, and we had only to decide whether we would be good according to this

pattern or bad according to that, then Christian character wouldn't be worth two whoops, and Jesus knew it.

Jesus said, "My sheep listen to my voice and I know them and they follow me." For the person who has ears to hear and eyes to see, Jesus' life spoke plainly. His attitudes and his spirit mark an unwavering trail. When the sheep hear the master's voice they do not follow the same path but they go in the same direction. So it was when Jesus was asked, "If thou art the Christ tell us plainly," he replied, "I have already told you." One of the Disciples once came to Jesus asking much the same thing, "Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us." Jesus answered him in much the same way, "Have I been so long with you, and dost thou not know Me, Phillip? He that hath seen Me, hath seen the Father. . . . I have already told you."

Jesus had already told the people plainly as he stood with a group surrounding a woman who had been taken in adultery. He did not condone sin, neither did he condemn the sinner as others were doing. Jesus had already told them plainly when men like Zachaeus came into His presence and immediately saw their own sins in a new light. He made known His identity whenever a Zachaeus was transformed by the power of His presence. How could the people have been told more plainly the Jesus was the Christ than by his ministry to the mourning. They had heard him say, "Be joyful, this child is not dead, she is but asleep." They had seen the look of hope that came into the tear-dimmed eyes of mourning men and women when he told them, "In my Father's house are many places of rest. If it were not so, I would have told you."

The Jews in his day asked Jesus the same question that Jews and gentiles are asking today, "If thou art the Christ, tell us plainly." He could only answer them as he answers today, "I have already told you, and you believe me not."

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

Progress in World Missions.

LESSON: Acts 13:13—14:28; Galatians 3:23-29. Print Acts 13:44-52; Galatians 3:26-29.

GOLDEN TEXT: "For ye are all sons of God, through faith, in Christ Jesus." Gal. 3:26.

DEVOTIONAL READING: Psalm 67.

INTER. & SR. TOPIC: Paul and Barnabas Spreading the Good News.

Y. P. & ADULTS: Paul Turns to the Gentiles.

Jerusalem was the home Church and from it missions reached out to Samaria, Lydda, Joppa, Caesarea, Damascus, and Antioch. Antioch then, becoming a missionary Church, in turn reached out to Philippi, Derbe. This is the constantly recurring story of the spread of Christian Missions. Explain the action reviewed in verses 13-16 having to do with the defection of John Mark, the faithful assistant of Paul and Barnabas. Just why the young man turned back from the expedition and went again to his mother's house in Jerusalem is not told us. Barnabas took his part and on later journeys we find Barnabas and John Mark together. The unfavorable climate soon

forced them to leave Perga and they made a toilsome journey of one hundred miles inland and upward toward the city of Antioch in Pisidia. They found enough Jews to keep active and alive a synagogue in spite of the fact that it was predominantly Gentile country. Paul was a rabbi and a pupil of the famous Gamaliel in Jerusalem and a former member of the Sanhedrin. To-day he would be called Senator Paul. As their custom was, they first make the acquaintance of the Jews, go into a synagogue and there preach to the Jews the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. The opening passage of the sermon was calculated to give Paul's audience confidence in him by showing that he was thoroughly at home in Old Testament history. With a view to showing that Christ was the climax of God's providential plan for the Jews, Paul traced that Providence from the beginning, giving a synopsis of Hebrew history.

After reviewing the history, Paul's discourse took a sharp turn far less pleasing to his hearers. He told how the Jews, God's favorite people, had defeated Jehovah's purpose for them at the very climax of His providences by refusing to believe in His Son and slaying their Messiah on the cross. He closed his sermon impressively first with an offer of salvation, "Through this Man is proclaimed unto you remission of sin" and then followed that with a solemn warning against their unbelief. The sermon brought results. It was followed by much discussion on the part of the Jews, many of whom believed in the Messiah, and the next Sabbath the entire city was gathered together. The very success which attended Paul's efforts aroused bitter antagonism. However, Paul and Barnabas continued their fearless ministry, speaking openly and boldly in the name of the risen Christ.

The Jews, having refused to hear, Paul and Barnabas turned to the Gentiles. This was the course which Paul always followed and so successfully that He has become known as the Great Apostle to the Gentiles. They found that the Gentiles were more eager to hear and to receive the message than the Jews had been. The Jews stirred up trouble and Paul and Barnabas betook themselves to Iconium. Extreme persecution defeated its own ends, and the result of Paul's work at Antioch of Pisidia illustrates clearly the effect of all faithful preaching. Paul was content to sow the seed leaving the harvest results to God.

EVENING SERMON

THEME: *Bedouin Christians.*

W. J. McCULLOUGH.

TEXT: "He wandered in the wilderness in a solitary way." Psalm 107:4.
HYMNS: "I was a wandering sheep . . ."—*Lebanon, S. M. D.*
"Art thou weary, . . ."—*Stephanos, P. M.*

The Bedouin today is an arab, a nomadic arab, or tent dweller of Arabia, Syria, Palestine or northern Africa. He wanders with his family or little tribe from mountain to mountain, and valley to valley. His only home is a piece of ragged, goat-hair cloth hung over four or more sticks.

Today there are those who are known as semi-Bedouins. They have a settled home in some village where they spend the winter, or rainy season. As soon as the worst rains of the winter are over, they leave their houses, and live under the black cloth roof for the remainder of the year, wandering with their herds. For about three-quarters of a year, therefore, they live as Bedouins. These semi-Bedouins usually move in a restricted area, never going very far away from their settled home.

The Jews in their early history were wandering Bedouin people. During the forty years of wandering in the desert, after the Egyptian bondage, the children of Israel reverted to the nomadic life. With Joshua they entered Palestine, settling first at Shechem. Since that time, although the Jews have been an oft disturbed and a much scattered people, they have never been a nomadic people.

1. *There are certain types of "Bedouin Christians."* They include: 1. Those who are unsettled in church loyalty. There is little difference between the Protestant Evangelical Churches today. But why use that argument for joining no church? If Church government and doctrine is not a deciding issue with you, attend and join the church in which you think you could do the most and be the happiest. We should like to have such Bedouins decide to settle down and make this Church their *home.* But if you cannot make this Church your settled home, join some other. A Bedouin Christian fails to give or get the most.

Those who consider themselves Christians, but are members of no church and attend none regularly. I believe it is possible to be a Christian without being a Church member. But if a person is well enough, and free to attend Church and is a Christian, he will not only want to, but will be anxious to unite with and worship regularly at some Church, to associate himself with other Christians, for the purpose of fellowship, and for the purpose of sharing himself with the cause of Christ.

Those who have a Church, but wander most of the year. This class of semi-Bedouins is by far the largest. Too many people join a Church and wander from it, coming back only occasionally and only then during the winter when other wandering becomes too difficult to be a pleasure. So long as they have been baptized, someone else can do the Church work, somebody else can support the Church, somebody else can pray and worship in the Church. It is strange reasoning, but it is the careless, indifferent Christian life that is the easiest. There is no need for Bedouin Christians in this life and no room for them in the life to come.

I am glad that phrase is in our text, "They wandered in the wilderness in a solitary way." It was not a happy life; it was not a life of peace, of joy, of contentment. They wandered in a solitary way.

II. For a Bedouin to become a settled resident, certain sacrifices are necessary. He must give up his so-called freedom to wander; he must pay the price that a settled home demands. The Bedouin Christian who would become a settled resident of Christ's Kingdom must likewise make the necessary sacrifices. He must give up his so-called freedom and pay the price that a settled Christian life demands. He must say, "I will make Jesus master over my whole being." Our lives are too much like the Temple of

Christ's time—defiled by the merchandise of sin and robbed by thieving companions.

Let Christ have your whole heart. Say with me this morning, "Jesus, every fiber of my being shall be devoted to Thee. Not only shall my heart be Thine, but my talents, my money, my head shall be thine." Today we so occupy our heads with newspapers and cheap magazines that the Bible and current Christian literature get a very small place. In surrendering ourselves to God, there is even more than heart and head to consider. There is the outward expression of heart and mind: relation to society, position among men, attitude with family and friends, use of money, use of time, business dealings. All this should be put in the hands of Jesus. Such a surrender is a blessed experience.

God longs to see nothing in us but Jesus; and if we surrender all to Him so that there is nothing in us but Jesus, then we have brought to God the sacrifice that is most acceptable to Him and which He blesses. Oh, believers, come out of your troubles, out of your self-efforts, out of your self-confidence, out of your sin, and let Christ take possession of you!

Paul knew the meaning of complete surrender. "I have been crucified with Christ." And again, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, . . ."

III. What does it mean to give up Bedouin Christianity and to be alive in Christ and how can I enter into such life? We know that the great mark of Christ was His death from which issued His life.

"Reckon yourselves dead unto sin." At the very moment I begin to believe in Jesus, I become united to Christ. By active faith in Christ you are to "Reckon yourselves dead unto sin and alive unto God in Christ Jesus. Your vital union to Christ makes you actually and utterly dead to sin and alive to the things for which he lived. Praise God that belief in Him, obedience to His Word, faith in Jesus Christ is all that is needed to bring Christ's death and Christ's life unto us. It is natural that life should issue from death. First comes death to sin—then comes life in Christ.

IV. What are the marks of a man who has turned from the Bedouin life to a life of full surrender?

1. *Deep and absolute humility is the first.* Christ humbled himself and became obedient unto death. Oh, that I could get deeper down and be nothing at all that the life of Christ might be all in all. Humility is the mark of a crucified man.

2. *The second mark is that of helplessness.* When a man dies he is helpless. While you and I try to think ourselves all-sufficient, as this age is inclined to do, we shall never know the new life!

3. Restfulness is the third mark of the man who has turned from the Bedouin life to the *life of full surrender.* Not satisfaction with life, but contentment. "I press toward the mark," said Paul. "I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therein to be content." God gives a restful contentment to those who throw their lives—body, head and heart—into the battle for righteousness.

MID-WEEK SERMON

THEME: ***The Message of Jesus to Modern Youth.***

TEXT: Matthew 20:22.

This incident typical of the eternal youth spirit. Lust for power, high courage, clear vision to certain point, disdain of ordinary processes. And Christ meets it. The Cup: of disillusionment as to spirit of men; of betrayal by men; of death at hands of men. A bitter Cup but never a cup of despair.

To Walk Among Men Without Bitterness: Bids us face facts as they are; never to falsify, never to distort. Means just what he found, disillusionment and disappointment. Hard fact for sanguine youth: all men are not dependable. Men and women make this "a cock-eyed world." Jesus saw his fellows clear-eyed, but he never gave them up. Sold out by a friend, but he never renounced world. Crucified, but prayed: "Forgive them." Christ held to God and God never failed him. Understood spiritual forces attacking men. Rejoiced in many who held true despite everything. Can you hold true? Can you walk without bitterness?

To Live in Social Order Without Despair: Today individual seems to count for little. Only a member of social order, and that seems important thing. Social order seems in danger of collapsing. Across seas: youth marching at order of dictators. In own land: machines and profits. Social orders have collapsed before. Feudal: agricultural. Jesus lived in his world and found fault with it. Fought invested interests and invested interest crucified him. But before he died he made his contribution to progress and the world has changed. Slowly but surely human values are becoming top values in human thinking.

To Make Full Contribution to Progress: There is our hope and our opportunity. Jesus gave his best mind to men; his heart fully; and his life, refusing to surrender his ideals, or to betray those who trusted him. It is fight or quit, save or squander. Are you able?

TOPICS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE'S SOCIETIES

CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR: Y. P.—June Topic—Torchbearers. Paul, the Zealous. Acts 9:1-8. Phil. 3:8-9.
Jr.—Improving Our Work. Have I done My Part? Psa. 40:1-3, 8-17.
LUTHER LEAGUE: Sr.—Colored races among us. Acts 8:26-31.
Y. P.—Confirmation. Acts 19:6-7.
Inter.—Christian Symbols. John 1:36.
WALTHER LEAGUE: June Topic, Family Altar. Your Own. Prayer Life Fundamental. Service Project. Purchase and distribute devotional booklets to every home in community.

JUNE, FOURTH SUNDAY

CALL TO WORSHIP: "Bless ye God in the congregations, even the Lord, from the fountain of Israel." Ps. 68.
PSALM: 97.
PRELUDE: Faith—*Mendelssohn.*
ANTHEM: God Is Love—*Shelley.*
OFFERTORY:
POSTLUDE: Minuett—*Guilmant.*
OFFERTORY SENTENCE: "Show me Thy ways, O Jehovah; teach me Thy paths, guide me in Thy truth, and teach me." Psalm 25.
OFFERTORY PRAYER: We bring our gifts gladly, as Thou hast bestowed Thy love upon us. Receive our gifts in Thy name, and bless us in Thy service, now and forevermore.
BENEDICTION: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

SERMONS

THEME: *Living Anew.*

J. PERCIVAL HUGET, D. D.

TEXT: John 3:3.
HYMNS: "Lord, as we Thy name profess."—*St. Bees,* 7, 7, 7, 7.
"O Thou great Friend."—*Morecambe,* 10, 10, 10, 10.

"Except a man be born again." The days and months and years through which our world and with it our Christian faith, have been passing have driven me back to these familiar words. And to the realization that they have far wider and deeper meaning than we have ordinarily supposed. A new birth, a new life, must come to the nations if they are to be saved.

Let us get the meaning clear. Born "again" is the familiar rendering of the Authorized Version. But Jesus made it clear in His reply to puzzled Nicodemus that this would be not just the first birth repeated. It would be the entrance upon a new experience as genuine and as completely other than the unchanged life as though life had then and there first begun. The margin carries the alternative translation "anew." It is the newness which is important. It is something added and different, something not there before. But the Revision makes it still more clear. It is "from above." The new birth is divine in its origin and its impartation. It is not of our doing nor of our choosing. It is the work of God's Spirit and only can thus be wrought.

Ordinarily and naturally enough the reference is to personal conversion. This is one of the great texts of the Evangelist. Either by some great, and often sudden, change of heart or by continued and culminating acceptance, life, if it is ever to be more than animal existence, must be lifted to higher levels. In the sixth verse of the same chapter Jesus proclaims one of the axioms of the religious life, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the spirit is spirit."

But these days have newly made clear the important truth that the truth here stated is applicable to life as a whole. The nations must be born again. It means simply that unless human nature is changed, renewed, born "from above" it is animal, brutal, beastly, cruel, treacherous, devilish.

To quote, "We are beginning to understand Christianity in the only way in which you can understand anything, namely, by perceiving the kind of thing this life of ours would be were Christianity now to fail." There have been terrible revealings. We see what the essential nature of unchanged humanity is. We had forgotten or did not ever really know what the human heart without God can be and is. "How were we to know that man, when he repudiates God and conscience, which is the memory and sense of God, is simply an animal, and, like every other animal who has no master, is wild?"

Always, and emphatically at this time, we in the Christian Church and in the Christian Life need to realize anew and clearly what Christian Faith means, what Christian living is, wherein and in what degree it differs from that which is not Christian.

We shall perceive this most vividly by the very contrast which is so appallingly presented. And we shall understand the full significance when we realize that Christ came and still comes to stand between us and utter tragedy, between us and complete disaster.

For this is the heart of the matter we have been too prone to forget, too little disposed to perceive clearly or apprehend fully; Christ came to rescue, to deliver, to save.

Jesus came to be the Great Teacher, but not that only, more than that. He came to comfort, and still promises us the peace which is never given by the world; but that peace rests upon a deeper foundation of deliverance. He came to guide and to strengthen, to enable us for the tasks and burden bearing of life's long laboriousness, but also to set us free from loads too heavy to be borne. He came to save, to deliver, to stand between us and defeat and despair and death.

For at its deep meaning, its full meaning, its final meaning, to follow Christ is a matter of life and death. The issue in life is warfare waged in the name of the soul. Paul saw it when he bade the early followers of the Way to "mortify" the deeds of the body, to put to death the warring members of sin.

So, also, this struggle is not only within our own spirits, but truly against principalities and powers, against the darkness of this world. And the justification for that faith which overcometh the world is our confidence in the transforming power of the grace of God in Christ.

"Ye must be born again" applies to the life of peoples, of nations. It applies to philosophies and ideologies. Just as we know that "something must take place away down in the depths of our nature before we gain the victory over ugly passion or temper of our own," so we know that a deep change must take place in the very purposes and intents of rulers and peoples before any higher and nobler level of international conduct can be attained.

The undermining of Christian standards has brought Europe low, and it will rise again only if spiritually reborn to faith and to righteousness and to honor. "*What has happened in our day is simply this: we are seeing what life is without Christ.*" We are forced to realize what life cannot help being if and when there is no lofty restraint, no high guidance, no transforming grace. We see the darkness of an unlighted world. We see ourselves and our fellowmen as we *are* and as we must be without God.

Thus we begin to see, if we are still able to see, what Christ and His way

really mean. We see and understand because we see what it is to forsake Christ, to be without Him and His restraint of our brutalities and our bestialities. We see what life in this world would be without Him, what it is without Him, what it cannot help being without Him.

And thus we see, too, that "faith in Christ is an absolute necessity if human existence is to remain human." Here is the place where Christian theology meets with contemporary history. The truths of that theology are the only truths profound enough to explain what has been happening in our world. That old theology is new in its new revealing. The truth of it is portrayed and proclaimed in the sorrow and agony of a shattered world. That truth is that the soul of man must be changed. Otherwise he is what he now so clearly shows himself to be, "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." True not only of this individual and that, but of man as man, of humanity, of societies, of nations, of generations and centuries, of the very world itself. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh." That is the old truth now newly manifested.

So, also, is it true, that "That which is born of the spirit is spirit." And the Spirit moveth when and where and how He pleaseth. That there will be a re-birth of manhood, of honor, of justice and of brotherhood might be too much to hope if we knew of no power other than that of our unregenerate hearts. But God is able to change even these hard hearts and to transform us by the renewing of our minds.

There is hope, and I know of no other upon which there is any reason to rest. If we are to be saved it will once more be by the grace of God, by the undeserved mercies of One who will not even now cast us off. There is this hope for the world, that it may indeed "be born again" and so leave behind the life of cruelty and brutality of materialism and of denial of the things of the spirit. Therein is hope, a great hope just because it is the only hope.

And that hope has been held before in times no less dark than these. It is a hope which has never died out of the heart of faith. And unless and until that hope does die out we may live on and strive on,—may die if need be before the full light shines again, sure that if the dawning of the new day be delayed so that our watching eyes see it not others will see it, for the day will yet come and these shadows flee away. God sent His Son into the world that through Him the world might be saved.

"The light shineth in the darkness and the darkness has not overpowered it." These words were written centuries ago, but they may again be written today, and believed today, and again proved true. (Again quoting) "Thus in those far off days wrote one as he looked out upon a world tossing on a bed of pain, as our world is tossing today. Something like a hundred years had come and gone in which Christ had been contending with the natural darkness of things. Cruelties, brutalities, strange and terrible lapses of entire societies, this man had seen. The ancient world had risen with horrid unanimousness to crush to death the protesting body of Christians, to silence the rebuke and call of their Holy Master. It had been a terrible time. But this he could say, and, saying it, he knew he was saying everything, and predicting the final victory: "The light shineth in the darkness and the darkness has not overpowered it." And as it was in the beginning, it is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen."

(This sermon suggested by and in some degree reproducing the thought of an article in the British Weekly by Dr. John Hutton.)

Second Sunday After Trinity.

THEME: *The Way of the New Life.*

NORMAN NYGAARD, D. D.

SCRIPTURE: John 3:1-17.
TEXT: John 3:7.
HYMNS: "O Love that wilt not let me go."—*St. Margaret,* 88, 886.
"Thy Way, not mine, O Lord."—*Ibstone,* 6 6, 6 6.

Some time ago I saw on the blackboard of a Sunday School classroom a diagram of the plan of salvation. I was reminded of nothing so much as a Rube Goldberg cartoon. Somewhere, tucked away in a trunk, is a set of blue-prints of my old home. They are plans for a frame dwelling to be erected on Lot Number So-and-So, Block So-and-So in Highland Park addition to the City of Minneapolis. They described a house that was built when I was eight years old. An architect may look at them and say, "Why, that place is just a combination of two-by-fours, shingles, siding, one-half inch G. I. pipe, some plumbing fixtures, a little bit of masonry, and a lot 50x167 feet."

Ah, but Mr. Architect, you forget that I lived there. There is still a dent in the wall, never obscured by successive layers of wallpaper, where my brother's head struck when we were wrestling one morning in bed. Here's the alcove where little sister, four years old, slept. Here is where Grandmother Nygaard—"Bestamor" we called her in one of the few Norwegian words that we knew—used to sit and darn, and re-darn our socks. How the whole house rang with laughter when Mother and Dad celebrated their twenty-fifth anniversary. Here is where Mother used to sit when with heavy heart she indited cheery letters to her two sons overseas. Yes, here is where I planted some Indian moccasin plants when I was sixteen and came back brown as an Indian from the north woods. If you will be patient, Mr. Architect, the warm spring rains and April sunshine will send up their green spikes again this winter. Here is where we used to build an icy track for our sleds. Yes, here in the house is the very floor where we jumped up and down like Comanche Indians, when Dad poured a nightly scuttle of coal into our old "Radiant Home" heater. What a foolish, funny custom that was! No, Mr. Architect, you don't know what you are talking about. That isn't a frame dwelling, that's *home.*

In the same way that wonderful experience which we call salvation, another side of which is being born again, is something that you can't put down on paper. Only a poet could express it and he would turn away from the words that he had penned to say, "Inadequate! Impossible!"

So this morning, as we attempt to fathom this change of heart, this brushing away of old loyalties for new, old points of view for glorified new viewpoints. Let us realize that mere words cannot begin to describe the experience. It must be something that lays hold of our hearts. And I am confident that many good folk who may think that they have been born again because they understand the technical theological jargon in which the rebirth is described have perhaps never truly been regenerated.

What are some of the things that Jesus knew would happen to Nicodemus if ever he were to be born again? What would the changes be in the old man's heart? Let us see if we cannot grope for some words that may describe what happens.

1. The first thing apparently that Jesus knew would happen is that he

would become again as a little child, viewing the world of the Father with love and beauty.

The child's will is a will towards good will. If that new will, that new purpose, can be put into our hearts, then do we become childlike. John Drinkwater's prayer for the consecrated will expresses that thought:

> "Grant us the will to fashion as we feel,
> Grant us the strength to labor as we know,
> Grant us the purpose, ribbed and edged with steel,
> To strike the blow.
>
> "Knowledge we ask not,—knowledge Thou has lent,
> But, Lord, the will,—there lies our bitter need,
> Give us to build above the deep intent
> The deed, the deed."

Most of us do have pious sentiments of kindliness; we desperately want a better world, a better society, a better church. But we lack the will. As we become childlike our purposes are set upon the simple, elemental things of good. Becoming childlike we become Godlike.

2. Then, to borrow a phrase from G. A. Studdert Kennedy, when we are born again we bet our lives upon God. The world is betting on armaments. It is betting on force. It is betting that to the victor belongs the spoils. It is betting on the strength of the jungle, not the puny strength of right and peace and love. But the strange thing about those puny forces is that they do eventually win out.

When Jesus lived, the Zealots and many of the Pharisees thought of Jesus as a pacifist, unwilling as a patriot should always be, to uplift the standard of revolt against a foreign power. "Prate of love and peace-making! Bah! The only thing that Romans will ever understand is force. Make them taste cold steel. Let them hear the whizz of arrows and the *zinggg* of spears and they'll leave the country. Love your enemies? Bosh! Do good to them that hate you? Sentimental rubbish! Pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you? Tommyrot!

But Jesus long before decided upon the only means by which His kingdom, to be permanent, could be established. It was by the way of love. He was betting on love. He was betting on God. And, as Studdert Kennedy has pointed out, His last great gamble was the cross. Jesus saw clearly that not armaments nor force nor doles of food would save the world. The world could only be saved by love, love dying on a cross, love spilling red blood for the redemption of the world. And so He chose that way, conscious perhaps that it might fail but risking all upon it.

And so does the Christian make his wager, place his bet. With Dr. Kennedy, he says:

> "I walk in crowded streets, where men
> And women, mad with lust, loose-lipped, and lewd,
> Go promenading down to hell's wide open gates;
> Yet have I looked into my mother's eyes
> And seen the light that never was on sea
> Or land, the light of love, pure love and true,
> And on that love I bet my life. . . .

> ". . . . I bet my life on beauty, truth,
> And love! not abstract, but incarnate truth;
> Not beauty's passing shadow, but its self,
> Its very self-made flesh—love realized,
> I bet my life on Christ, Christ crucified."

3. Last of all, when we are born again we are born into a new country. Our country is the Kingdom of Heaven. Moffatt, in one of the particularly inspired passages of his translation, takes the phrase of Paul's in Phil. 3:20 that we usually translate, "Our conversation is in heaven" and translates it instead, "We are a colony of heaven." Paul knew what it was to be in a colony. All of the territories that had been acquired by war were colonies. All of these colonies paid tribute to Rome and, as Roman colonies, they were protected from outside aggression by the parent state.

Paul took a reasonable pride in his Roman citizenship. To be sure, he took also what some of us would regard today as a most reactionary view of the citizen's duty towards the state. The American revolution would have been an impossibility, of course, if the colonists had literally obeyed Paul's injunction in regard to their duty to obey all civil rulers. But his Roman citizenship did give the apostle a constructive view of the purposes of government. And, beyond doubt, Paul visualized a Kingdom that should know no end, eternal in the heavens, with colonies among all Christian folk. We are a colony of heaven. And our citizenship is an inward experience for Jesus has said, "The Kingdom of heaven is within you."

Now we need to remember that if we are a colony of heaven, if we are citizens of the Kingdom, there are times when we must choose between different loyalties. There are those folk in the world who are moved tremendously by family loyalties. But Jesus said, "If a man hate not his father and mother he cannot be my disciple." He meant that as between the two loyalties, that to the home and that to the Master and the Kingdom, the one or the other had to be triumphant. The home loyalty might have to be sacrificed if the two conflicted.

Now it is true that in many situations we can be both good American citizens and good Christians. But there come times when the state makes certain demands upon us as citizens that sharply conflict with our duties as citizens of the Kingdom of Heaven. And then a choice must be made. I know of religious folk, for instance, who believe that whenever the Senate of the United States of America—which on ordinary occasions they do not respect any too highly—declares war it is the duty of every citizen, regardless of his religious scruples, or of his feeling in regard to that particular war, to join the colors. That may involve, you see, a definite choice between Caesar and God; with them Caesar wins every time. Far worse still, these religious folk seek to bring to every war the sanction of godliness. God is on our side. God is our ally. "Gott mit uns."

If God is really to be with us we must be with Him. Merely shouting and protesting loudly about how God is our friend and our ally does not make Him such. We must be sure that we are allied to His Kingdom, that we are truly doing His will in His way. If we aren't willing to do that then,

in common decency, we ought to keep Him out of the picture. We ought to say quite honestly, "Here is where we part company with our Lord." We may hope that we shall get back to Him some day but at any rate we are not going to follow Him for the duration of the war, or the industrial conflict or into the death-house where in the name of the law we'll take another man's life. For the time being we are going to ally ourselves with Satan. We are, in common parlance, going to the devil, or going to Hell. Let's recognize that.

4. The Church is facing one of the greatest tests today. It may come out as a Kingdom church. It may come out as a reactionary, Pharisaic, altogether worldly organization. It may be born again along with the folk who comprise it. It may compromise with evil and go along, into the outer darkness. The church of the Russia that was swept away in the red revolution was that kind of a church. It had yielded itself up to a corrupt and evil state: it was on the side of privilege and monopoly, and it didn't live. There was a righteous remnant, it is true, and that remnant is still able to hold on, holding up the *lamp of faith* in Russia, but the rest has been swept away.

Halford Luccock makes a pregnant statement in his book, "Jesus And The American Mind," when he says (P. 119) "When Christianity came up from the catacombs to become the official religion of Rome, it left something precious down in the dark. It gained extension; it lost its intensity. It gained in bulk; it lost its savor. When it ceased being a faith of desperate minority and became the faith of an ever-growing majority, it gained the whole world and lost its own life." A modern poet has been still more critical and has said in his poem "The Church Today"

"Outwardly splendid as of old—
Inwardly sparkless, void and cold—
Her force and fire all spent and gone—
Like the dead moon she still shines on."
Watson

If that criticism is not to be true then must the church, and the individual Christian, experience that rebirth that will transform them to become effective instruments for the working out of God's will here on earth. We must be born again just as truly in the twentieth century as old Nicodemus needed to be in the first.

PRAYER

Shine Thou into our hearts, O love of God, with the intensity and understanding of the compelling rays of the sun during the heat of the day. Reform and renew our hearts within us to the end that our outward expressions may glorify Thy Name forevermore. Amen.

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

First Jerusalem Conference on World Missions.

LESSON: Acts 15:1-35; Galatians 2. Print Acts 15:6-21.

GOLDEN TEXT: "But we believe that we shall be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, in like manner as they." Acts 15:11.

DEVOTIONAL READING: Galatians 4:1-7.

INTER. & SR. TOPIC: Learning to Work Together for World Missions.

Y. P. & ADULTS: The First Jerusalem Conference on World Missions.

Review Acts 15:1-5. While Paul and Barnabas were working successfully at Antioch a very serious problem arose, namely, just how far should the converts be required to conform to Jewish religious laws and customs. (See Galatians 2:4.) This involved not only circumcision but restriction to meat prepared in a special way and purchased in a special market, the observance of endless and meaningless rites and rules as to dress, posture, etc., and the hardening of sympathies which interposed an impassable barrier between all Gentile friends and loved ones, and aroused no end of controversy in the Antioch Church. Finally, they decided to appoint Paul and Barnabas together with some others as a deputation to go to Jerusalem and thrash out the whole matter.

The Jerusalem Church received them with utmost cordiality and a General Assembly was called in order that they might learn from Paul of his missionary journey and its results and pass upon the question involved.

Very wisely the general meeting was adjourned in order that the matter might be thrashed out first in a smaller meeting of responsible leaders, the Apostles and Elders. As the oldest of the Apostles, Peter was a commanding figure among them. (See Acts 10.) James adds his contribution. He pointed out that God intended to build the Gentiles into His Kingdom, and (Amos 9:11-12) suggested that the Gentiles be not troubled with Jewish rites but that four simple and fundamental requirements should be laid upon them: that they should abstain from meat that was consecrated to idols and other things that might turn them back again to the old, polluted ways, that they refrain from fornication, that they not eat the meat of beasts that had been killed by strangling, but by cutting of the throat and draining off the blood, and that they be forbidden to eat the blood which variously cooked was a favorite dish of the heathen but which was particularly abhorrent to the Jews because they looked upon the blood as the seed of life. This was a wise compromise intended to secure the agreement and acquiesence of both parties. It freed the Gentile Christians from the necessity of circumcision while it placed them under the necessity of avoiding being associated with idol worship. The restrictions laid upon them were conducive to good health and good morals and the Jews yielded far more than they required. Notice that James did not even forbid the eating of swine flesh. Thus each party came part way to meet the other, always a Christian method of settling disputes. It is difficult to over-estimate the importance of this critical problem. Upon the decision hung the whole destiny of the Church whether it was to be a world-wide, race-wide affair, or simply a sect of the Jews.

EVENING SERMON

THEME: ***The Symbolism of the Sea.***

THOMAS J. LACEY, Ph. D.

TEXT: "There was no more sea." Rev. 21:1.
HYMNS: "Father, whate'er of earthly bliss . . ."—*Naomi, C. M.*
"O for a Faith that will not shrink."—*Ortonville, C. M.*

There is a striking passage in Loti, where he describes a child's first impression of the ocean at twilight: "Suddenly I stood still, rigid and shivering with terror. In front of me lay something—something dark and sounding—which had risen up on all sides at once, and seemed to be without end. It was of an obscure green, almost black. It looked unstable, treacherous, greedy, seething and raving. Above it stretched the sky in unbroken leaden gray. I was fascinated. What I felt in its presence was not simple dread, but a nameless melancholy, a sense of desolate solitude, desertion, exile."

The sea! There is a peculiar fascination about it which has written itself indelibly on the literature of every people. The immortal dramas of Euripides among the ancient Greeks, Beowulf of our Saxon forefathers, reflect the spirit of the great deep. The imagery is drawn from the seafaring life. Old ocean forms the background. The stanzas ring with the spirit of the vikings. One hears the roar of distant waves. He sees the billows breaking at his feet. He feels the greatness and sublimity of nature.

You remember the scene in Xenophon where the writer describes the retreat of the Ten Thousand? They had suffered privation and hardship. They were miles from home. They had seen their comrades perish in the contest. The battle was against them. Their banner had gone down in defeat. The discouraged remnant had tramped weary miles. One day they came to a hilltop. Lo, in the distance a vision of the sea burst on their eyes. Word passed from man to man. A shout of joy broke from the whole army. The sea! The old time spirit of adventure took possession of them. They were overcome with emotion even as Balboa looking for the first time on the Pacific instinctively sank to his knees in prayer.

The imagery of the sea meets us again and again in the Scriptures. Sometimes it stands for unbridled strength; sometimes for mystery; sometimes for turmoil and unrest. The turbulent waters suggest instability, unsatisfactoriness, the evanescence of temporal things.

The Church under stress of adversity is likened to a ship at the mercy of the waves. The architectural term 'NAVE' applied to the body of the Church suggests this thought.

The sea is so bound up with our earthly conceptions that we are startled when St. John, in his wonderful description of heaven, reaches a climax in the statement, "There was no more sea." The Book of Revelation is not to be taken literally. It is the record of a vision. Spiritual truth is clothed in poetry and symbol. All language is too meagre to give expression to the deep things of God. Human speech is inadequate to convey the conception

of that which neither eye hath seen nor ear heard. St. John sets forth the splendor of heaven under the figures of gold, precious stones and pearls, but these only faintly mirror forth its glory, for it is a glory that passes human comprehension. When John wrote he was an exile in Patmos. The sea-bound isle cut him off from friends and companions. The cruel emperor had banished him to that island prison. We can picture the apostle standing on the seashore, stretching his eye over the blue water. It was the Lord's day. His mind goes back to the Christian assembly. Their names and faces come before him. He longs for some word from them. But the sea lashing upon the rocky coast separates the lonely exile from the fellowship of the faithful. As he looks, the whole matter is lifted to a higher plane. He sees heaven open. He sees the new earth, and there is no more sea!

To him the sea stands for separation, parting, division and there flashes upon him the vision of a land where separation shall be no more and we shall all be home with God.

You know what tender associations cluster around the fireside. The very word awakens sacred memories. Travelers tell us how on the shores of the Adriatic the wives of the fishermen come down at sunset and sing their national melodies. They pause and soon an answering strain is heard from the far off waters. Thus they sing and listen until their husbands and brothers in the distance catch the echo and join the chorus and the watchers are thrilled with the thought that their loved ones are almost home. Why is it that the home is surrounded by so much poetry and romance? It is because the home is the centre of the family unity. When the day's toil is over, the father gathers the children at the hearthstone. The little one plays on the grandfather's knee. Oh, how bitter the pain when the unity is broken! How desolate when God calls one of those little ones or when the head of the house is taken! The prayer of Jesus is the universal prayer, "Father, I will that those whom Thou hast given me be with me where I am." We cannot bear the thought of separation from our dear ones. These earthly homes, in the happiness of their unbroken circle, are the faint foreshadowings of that realm where sorrow never comes, and where God shall wipe away all tears.

Our text brings a message of comfort. If it meant much to the exile in his loneliness and isolation, it has lost none of its meaning to-day. As long as we live in a perishing world, as long as death is a factor in life, as long as men lay the cold forms of dear ones away and hear the sound of the earth on the coffin, and stand face to face with the infinite mystery, so long the heart will look up through its tears and welcome the revelation of that land where there is no more sea.

The mystic dreaming in the Aegean isle,
While all he loves in life are far away
And blue waves lap his little rocky prison,
Tells of a life where parting's pain shall cease
And on the golden page puts down the words
There shall be no more sea.

MID-WEEK SERMON

THEME: ***Our Estimate of Ouselves.***

TEXT: Job 33:4.

"A nickel's worth of iodine in your thyroid gland is all that keeps you from becoming an idiot." Chemists estimate a man as being ninety-eight cents worth of chemicals. To the evolutionist he is an evolved amoeba. To the psychologist a group of more or less animated reactions. Job's estimate.

We Estimate Ourselves More Than Animal: Bodily kinship admitted, we hold ourselves higher than animal. We claim the evidence of the ages. Man insists on climbing. Every step widens gulf between him and animal. Outflies the eagle. Outpulls the ox. Outsees the vulture. Since man first lengthened arm with club has never stopped. Important thing, not where he came from, but where he is going.

We Estimate Ourselves As Spiritual: To say this is proof of being higher than animal. Man thinks, feels, wills. Not wholly limited by body. May in measure determine sensations will experience. Has to stay with body, but may in part determine where body will be. We may send our minds out from ourselves. We are aware of spiritual things: Truth, Beauty, Goodness. And God feeds the spirit. Brings responsibilities. Determine where body will be, responsible for where body is. Determine doing, living, responsible for acts, for character of life. Responsible for good or evil.

We Estimate Ourselves as Salvable: Looking at life, some see only opposition of good and evil, and so are in despair. But God offers salvation, and we can be saved from the evil that is in the world. We can lay hold on God who will save us. Jesus Christ is God's Answer to the pessimism that is in the world today. So we bring you back to Christ and to his great work for us. He redeems us, saves us, makes possible our going on to greater and higher spiritual gains. 2 Corinthians 3:18.

TOPICS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE'S SOCIETIES

CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR: Y. P.—Torchbearers. Hebr. 11:32-40.
Jr.—Improving our work. Phil. 3:13-16.
LUTHER LEAGUE: Sr.—Christian Character. Matt. 5:20.
Y. P.—Holy Communion. I Cor. 11:23-29.
Inter.—Rocks. Matt. 7:24-27.
WALTHER LEAGUE: Family Altar (Continue Service Project).

FOR THE BULLETIN BOARD

Not even your car can run if the tank be empty.
Treat your religion practically and it will treat you the same.
As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he. Has your heart been cleansed?
Thou shalt not kill, even en mass. War is murder.
Have you ever tried using your Christianity?
Lots of charity begins at home—and ends there.
It's the blazing log that warms.
It's the unknown road which seemingly has no end.
Do you get more miles per gallon than per Gospel?

JUNE, FIFTH SUNDAY

CALL TO WORSHIP: "The Lord knoweth them that are His; and, Let everyone that nameth the name of the Lord depart from unrighteousness."
PSALM: 96.
PRELUDE: Prelude in D—*Loud.*
ANTHEM: The Lord Is Rich And Merciful—*Barnby.*
OFFERTORY: Cazone Amoroso—*Nevin.*
POSTLUDE: Andante Con Moto—*Smart.*
OFFERTORY SENTENCE: "Offer the sacrifices of righteousness, and put your trust in Jehovah. . . . Thou hast put gladness in my heart, more than they have when their grain and their new wine are increased."
OFFERTORY PRAYER: Our increase and our plenty come from Thee, and we prosper only as Thou art willing to increase our responsibility toward the fulfilment of Thy Kingdom on earth. Help us to accept Thy will as a constant guide, and lead us to Thee. We beseech Thee for help in time of temptation, and strength to be steadfast in our promises to Thee.
BENEDICTION: And now may the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

SERMON

THIRD SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

THEME: *He Could Not Take Second Place.*

JOHN C. WALKER, D. D.

TEXT: "Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth." Matt. 5:5.
HYMNS: "How beauteous were the marks Divine . . ."—*Angelus, L. M.*
"Jesus, and shall it ever be . . ."—*Federal St., L. M.*

Through 1915 and 1916 a series of military disasters, culminating in the German invasion of Rumania, brought discredit on the British government. Events at home and abroad finally brought matters to a crisis. It was proposed that the cabinet should be completely reorganized and that a new man should be placed at the head of the government. Mr. Asquith was to be given a high place in the new cabinet, a Lord Chancellorship or a Lord Presidency, but while he was to have a high place he was no longer to have first place.

The whole story of this political crisis, as far as Mr. Asquith was concerned, turns on one question. When it was made plain that he was to be asked to take a subordinate position he exclaimed, "What is the proposal? Is it that I, who have held first place for eight years, should be asked to take a secondary position?" If in a great crisis in a nation's history with the lives of millions of people at stake, a man in public office has as his one great concern to hold the first place for himself, he is condemned by the words of his own mouth. The man who cannot, who will not take second place, who puts personal feeling and personal pride before the public interest, is unworthy of the name of statesman.

We have something more or less comparable in our history, if similar reports are to be credited. Second only to Abraham Lincoln as an orator, we have the name and fame of Daniel Webster.

But Daniel Webster had the fatal fault of pride. His pride served to keep him from the very place he most desired to reach. Daniel Webster's one consuming ambition was to be president. Nothing short of the presidency would satisfy him and the nomination for that office somehow always eluded him. In 1840 when William Henry Harrison was nominated, I understand that Daniel Webster was sought for vice presidency but like Herbert Henry Asquith, was too proud to take second place. He put personal pride above

the public interest and it is inconceivable that any man can hold the highest rank in history who has put pride of place and position above the public good.

There is considerable warrant for saying that pride is an element in all sin and failure in life. One distinguished New Testament scholar says, "So for Jesus pride, in one form or another, is the cardinal sin. It lies at the root of every other sin because it consists in a perversion of the will." You recall how outspoken Jesus was in his condemnation of hypocrisy. The hypocrite, if you happen to note, is always a proud man. He thinks he is far more clever, far more impressive, far more convincing than he really is. He is usually quite proud of himself but with precious little warrant for his pride.

If in public life, selfish pride is a fatal bar to the noblest type of public service, so in private life, in the home, in the school, in the shop, in the store, in the club, in the church, in the community, personal pride works its havoc and brings about its tragedies. As a matter of fact we have two essential problems in dealing with people and in living our own lives. One very difficult problem in the work of furthering most good causes and in carrying on the manifold activities and services of the church, is this business of finding people to take first place, to serve on committees or accept office, to assume responsibility and carry on the work. So many people are "too busy" to take responsibility even when they have manifest ability—and some other person who is far busier, and who is already carrying too heavy a load, takes over the responsibility and usually with little or no complaint. God bless the people who make the hard task easy and shoulder the added burden with a smile.

All this about the people who refuse to take first place is as far as the present discussion is concerned. What I have most in mind this morning is the person who cannot take second place, who will have the first and foremost place and all the rights and privileges appertaining thereto, or nothing at all; the person who can't step down gracefully, who refuses to march in the rear rank, the person who thinks in terms of honor and privilege instead of service and help to the cause. We all are tainted with personal pride, one aspect of our personal selfishness. What we all need is a more selfless devotion, a greater disinterestedness. When we use that word "disinterestedness" in the better sense, we mean, not a lack of sincere interest, but a lack of selfish interest. Homes are broken up and family quarrels so often develop as a result of the clash of selfish interests. The question arises, who comes first? Communities are rent asunder and ill feeling spreads like a plague on occasion. Why? Well, someone was slighted, someone was overlooked. No inconsiderable part of the international troubles of the world can be traced back to national pride. The nations battle, not simply over access to raw materials, but over questions of prestige and so-called national honor. Somebody's face has to be saved, somebody's pride has to be considered.

Where is the ideal, what is the ideal toward which we must strive? How are we to learn to accept second place graciously and gracefully? We have the answer in the teachings of Jesus. I contend that the antidote to selfish pride is that lowliness of heart which the Psalmist praised when he said, "But

the meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace" and which Jesus made immortal by saying in the Sermon on the Mount, "Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth."

This is a difficult verse to interpret, and it is vastly more difficult to practise in everyday life. You know and I know that this is a verse which is flatly denied by the wisdom and practice of the world. The world at large sneers at the meek and the poor in spirit. People everywhere suppose that the race is to the swift, the battle to the strong. As has been said, "The world has its own idea of blessedness. Blessed is the man who is satisfied with himself. Blessed is the man who is strong. Blessed is the man who rules. Blessed is the man who is rich. Blessed is the man who is popular."—"Blessed are the meek!" Why someone says, "It is hardly possible to exaggerate the unanimity with which this is contradicted in the ordinary practice of humanity." Through all the ages the ruthless, the brutal, the commanding have forced their will on mankind and dominated the earth. The strong and the proud have inherited and conquered the earth and they bid fair to hold it for future time!

Yet I think we are clearly entitled to raise the question about the stability of their power. There is something very insecure about the place and the power won by ruthless ambition and held by pride of blood and possession. The bloodiest battles in this world have been fought by the strong against the strong. The heaviest losses have been suffered, not by the meek under the onslaught of the mighty, but by the powers of this world contending in battle array against each other. The very greatest figures in human history have been very often meek men, "the terrible meek." It isn't true as some seem to suppose that "meek" is the equivalent of "weak." It is rather that "meek" is the opposite of "proud."

George Washington and Abraham Lincoln, who stand head and shoulders above all other figures in our national pantheon of heroes, were essentially meek men. George Washington could have had a crown and sceptre but it was his custom not to claim first place but rather to seek release from public attention. The mildness and meekness of Lincoln's character is a matter of common knowledge. What calumnies and abuse, what slander and intrigue, he suffered during those war years! How could he suffer these things? Why, his forbearance and patience were almost infinite and he had no pride to serve! He was singlehearted in his devotion to the union.

Every man is welcome to his opinions and every man must live by his own faith but my conviction is that the ultimate victory must be with the meek. I have heard about the countless books on Napoleon but I neglected to visit his tomb when I was in Paris. I agree with the school children of France, Pasteur is greater than Napoleon. Marconi will be found to be worth a dozen of Mussolini when the last history of Italy is written. I prophesy that one day in the future German historians will acclaim the name of Einstein and offer humble apology for Hitler. To my way of thinking Mahatma Ghandi is greater than any of the viceroys of the British crown with whom he has disputed the freedom of India. This same Pasteur was not only a great scientist but a devout Catholic and a simple, humble, serviceable, faithful human soul. Yea, and a philosopher withal in his own quiet way. When they dedicated the Institute Pasteur the man in whose honor it was named delivered an address in which he said in his closing remarks,

"Two opposing laws seem to me now in contest. The one, a law of blood and death, opening out each day new modes of destruction, forcing nations to be always ready for battle. The other is a law of peace and health whose only aim is to deliver man from the calamities which beset him. The one seeks violent conquests, the other the relief of mankind. The one places a single life above all victories, the other sacrifices hundreds of thousands of lives to the ambition of a single individual. . . . Which of these two laws will prevail, God only knows."

There are indeed two laws in this world as the great French scientist suggests. In times like ours it is hard, almost unbearably hard, to keep our faith in the way of Jesus. One is the way of life, one the way of death. One is a way of power, one is the way of service. One is a way of pride, the other the way of meekness and lowliness of heart. One demands first place for himself, for his class, for his nation, for his race. The other is willing to take a second place of that place offers a larger and more vital opportunity to serve. The Beatitudes are the highest moral and religious teaching we know. If you say that they are so high that we cannot attain unto them I suggest that the only way we may make any real progress in things moral and spiritual is by choosing perfection itself as the goal.

The thing that makes a home beautiful is not self-assertion but self-restraint and self-discipline with an affectionate concern for other members of the family. The thing that makes a community friendly and livable is a prevailing spirit of cooperation and boundless good will. A nation becomes great not in the measure of its military might and prowess but in terms of a genuine good neighbor policy. In the midst of world-wide turmoil and confusion we can still believe that the final victory is with the meek and lowly of heart. It may take these people longer to come to power but they build on sure foundations, the eternal laws of God.

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, envelop us with Thy Spirit, and conquer our selfish pride and sullen hatreds through Thy Divine love and rule of service. Make us to see ourselves in the true light of Thy measure of Brotherly love, realizing our capacity to attain with Thy help even unto the ideal set before us in Christ Jesus. Amen.

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

Lessons from the Early Church.

LESSON: I Cor. 3:1-15.

GOLDEN TEXT: "For other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ." I. Cor. 3:11.

DEVOTIONAL READING: I Corinthians 1:17-25.

INTER. & SR. TOPIC: Helping to Make the World Christian.

Y. P. & ADULTS: Helping to Make the World Christian.

Paul had written a first letter to Corinth in the Autumn of A.D. 54. Only two fragments of this first letter to Corinth now survive. We have them in I Cor. 6:12-20 and in II Cor. 6:14-7:1.

The second letter which Paul wrote to Corinth was begun in February of 55 and is the book in our Bible which we call I Cor. Paul contemplated its delivery before Passover. Compare Chapter 5:6-8. In chapters 1-6:11 Paul reports on "the people of Chloe" and in 7:1 he starts answering a letter just at hand from Corinth. Our lesson today deals with the first part of this section.

Paul's critics had sneered at the simplicity of his teaching at Corinth and he retorts that his teaching was simply an accommodation to their incapacity. He had found them dull. It was impossible for him to address them as spiritual men. They were babes in Christ and babes' food was all that they could receive. Paul and Barnabas and Apollos were merely his ministers each doing his appointed task. Paul had planted the good seed, Apollos, his successor had watered it, but it was God that had made it grow. In verse 9 the Apostle passes abruptly from the figure of husbandry to that of building. God is building a spiritual sanctuary in which Paul was employed and he had done his part at Corinth. He had laid the foundation, then he had left Apollos to build up the wall. The foundation was essential and he had laid it firm and clear. The foundation was Jesus Christ. Their test was, were they building on that foundation?

This Corinthian Church was made up of ex-convicts, the most sinful and depraved groups in the city, who hearing the Gospel-call had submitted themselves in obedience to Christ. It often takes time even for the regenerative power of Christ to complete its full work. Paul was patient, always, with this Corinthian church. Compare the various churches which Paul established, the character of their constituents, the nature of their development, the work of sanctification among the people, etc.

The early Church prevailed because of three things: it outlived the Pagan world, it out-thought the Pagan world, and it out-suffered the Pagan world. These are three important tests today. The clearness of thought, the beauty and purity of life, and the calmness and faith with which death is faced—these should always be characteristic of the Christian.

EVENING SERMON

THEME: ***The Habits of Jesus.***

FRANK B. FAGERBURG, D. D.

TEXTS: "As was His custom."—Luke 4:16; 22:39. Mark 10:1.
HYMNS: "O Jesus, I have promised. . . ."—*Angel's Story,* 7, 6, 7, 6, *D.*
"More like Jesus would I be. . . ."—*More Like Jesus,* 7s, *D.*

A wise man says, "Sow an act and you reap a habit, sow a habit and you reap a character." Usually we have thought of habit only in the terms of bad ones, but good things make their imprint as certainly as bad ones, the habit, the slave-driver of some, can be made the humble obedient servant helping to perform the best. The great psychologist, William James, wrote "Every smallest stroke of virtue or vice leaves its never so little scar." Men who do right have made right a custom, a habit which helps to execute itself despite temptation to the contrary. The gospel recorders reveal the fact

that Jesus made some of the good things of His life habits—and the habitual customs of Jesus have much to teach us in the ordering of our own Christian lives.

Immediately after His temptation experience in the wilderness He turned His steps to the old home town, Nazareth. Perhaps no streets in that humble little town were more familiar to Him than the streets that led from his home to the synagogue or church. He was from a very religious race, and from a family true to all their race's traditions. Church attendance became for Him a settled, indelible habit. We shall never begin to calculate all that habit meant in the building of the man Jesus whom all the world adores.

I would not give, as you would not give, anything in the world in exchange for what the old home church did for me in building reverence, ideals and love for God and man into the very texture of my soul during the formative years of my young life. I would not give anything in exchange for the service of the church today in keeping fresh the vision and keeping the spiritual tone of life, and orienting my soul each week to God.

There are people who insist they do not need the church. I have no superstitious ideas about this institution. Of course attendance here is not necessary to salvation but I believe that every man needs the uplifting influence of worship, fellowship with worshipping Christian people and the regular discipline and re-orientation of soul that church helps to give. When I look upon that inimitable character of Jesus and recall that with all His goodness and strength He still kept the habit of attendance at His church, I see how foolish for me or any one today to imagine he does not need it too.

Jesus preserved that custom in spite of the synagogue's imperfections of which you may be sure it had many. He had outgrown it; He had gone beyond it. His church and its people were conservative and imperfect in many ways, yet He went there "as His custom was." The church of my day has plenty of faults and imperfections. Be sure I know them all only too well. But like my Master I shall maintain the old habit just the same.

Yet again we are indebted to Luke for an insight into the private life of Jesus. He says that after the meeting with His friends in the upper room Jesus went outside, and made His way to the Hill of Olives, as He was accustomed. We point to that experience of the Master as an illustration of the power of prayer to save a man's soul for sanity and courageous performance of duty. It is more than that—it is an illustration of the power of habitual prayer. Men have lived carelessly through the sunny years and then marvelled or doubted or despaired because the cry to God in the dark hour of need seemed to no avail. How much can a man count on spiritual resources in the extraordinary crisis if he has consistently neglected them in the ordinary affairs of life.

This was no isolated experience of Jesus'. He went to Gethsemane to pray—as was His custom. He had been there before, many times before, habitually; through every experience of joy, sorrow, anxiety, responsibility. He had welded a chain of prayer that at last held fast in the supreme moment.

What is the nature of your prayer life? Is it carefully locked away in some musty safe-deposit box of your soul like a forgotten insurance policy

to be searched out and used in the event of great stress? If it is you may discover when you need it most that it is all but "null and void" like an insurance policy whose premiums have not been met habitually. Or are your intentions good but you permit the urgent demands of a hundred home, business and social duties to rob from your day the trysting hour with God? There is nothing easier to neglect than the daily fellowship with the Divine in this tremendously busy age. If Jesus in His enriched, mature, matchless spiritual life needed the daily attunement, the prayerful at-one-ment with God, how much more do you and I in our mature, impoverished needy souls?

The other habit of Jesus' life Mark describes. "Crowds gathered to Him again, and again He taught them as His custom was." (Mark 10:1). It was not all a process of getting. Worship and prayer stored His life with spiritual power, but only that it might flow out to needy people. The street corner, a dining table, a friend's tax-office or fishing boat, any place was a place for Him to release to men the great things He had got from God. He taught them "as His custom was."

We need something of His willingness to pass on the spiritual riches we have gathered. Yes, we need teachers in the Church School who will regularly meet their appointments. But there are other ways—we need more lives radiant with spiritual reality who shall by their very Christian character teach through the subtle power of influence and suggestion the great things God performs in a man's life.

Every true Christian should be a teacher, a channel through which the power of God, received in worship and prayer can flow out to the world. This should be the aim and goal of all our spiritual growth.

Adopting the habits of Jesus we get at the heart of religious values. In the habit of worship, attendance at church, I get; in prayer, I grow; and in teaching and service I give—that I may get and grow and give again.

MID-WEEK SERMON

THEME: ***This Land of Ours.***

TEXT: Psalm 137:5.

Writer of Psalm a patriot in exile. Homesick for a ruined city, an impoverished land, a destroyed nation. How is it with us?

This Land of Ours, This America: Why we love America cannot be told within the conventional limits of a sermon. In all the world there is no land under one flag that holds so much of beauty and grandeur as this land of ours. But it is not because of these that we love America. No other land holds so many and so vast resources. But not because of wealth and material comfort do we love America. No other land where freedom walks unhindered and unlimited as in this land of ours. That is our heritage, and that is why we love this land of ours, this America.

The American Ideal of Government: Let us never forget this great heritage did not spring full-grown from the brow of fortune. It was carved out for

us with sword and musket, with broad-axe and plowshare. Our generation cannot hold this heritage inviolate without thoughtful, definite, positive effort. We need a fresh appreciation of our liberties. We need a new dedication of our lives to the American ideal. We need to remember there are conditions in our land today that need remedying. We need a revival of religion. Basically, liberty is spiritual. Its roots are in the spirit of man, and that means religion. National and social recovery has always been through the spiritual. In America we need the Church and the spiritual power of the Church to make the American Dream a reality in our day, to maintain democracy, to establish decency, to keep fellowship with the Divine.

TOPICS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE'S SOCIETIES

CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR: Y. P.—We Are Torchbearers. Matt. 28:16-20. Hebr. 12:1-2.
Jr.—Making Good Leaders. I Cor. 2:1-5.
LUTHER LEAGUE: Sr.—Camps. Conventions, and Vacations. Mark 6:30-32.
Y. P.—Support and Recovery in Sickness. James 5:14-16.
Inter.—Camps. Mark 6:30-32.
WALTHER LEAGUE: Family Altar (Continue Service Project).

FOR THE BULLETIN BOARD

The heights are reached alone by climbing.
Don't forget that your faith is what you are rather than what you think.
You can't get away from the air by trying to hide from it.
He drinks too much who drinks a little.
Rubber, like religion, deteriorates fastest when not used.
You can close your eyes to it but the sun still shines.
Disbelieving a truth affects you and not the truth.
The unused muscle atrophies.
Freedom is for the disciplined.

JULY, FIRST SUNDAY

CALL TO WORSHIP: "Incline Thine ear unto me, and hear my speech. Show Thy marvelous loving kindness, O Thou that savest by Thy right hand them that take refuge in Thee." Psalm 17.

PSALM: 93.

PRELUDE: The Answer—*Wolstenholme.*

ANTHEM: Sweet Is Thy Mercy—*Barnby.*

OFFERTORY: Evensong—*Johnston.*

POSTLUDE: March Triumphante—*Stewart.*

OFFERTORY SENTENCE: "Every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of Jehovah thy God which He hath given thee."

OFFERTORY PRAYER: O God, Thou art the meaning of life and its mystery; Thy love turns the shadow of disappointment into a song of victory; we praise Thy name and ask Thy blessing on these our gifts for Thy use. Our blindness hides from us the needs of those to whom we would minister, but Thou dost see all things. Help us to understand.

BENEDICTION: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

SERMON

Fourth Sunday After Trinity.

THEME: *Transforming Companionship.*

FRANK Q. CROCKETT, D. D.

TEXT: "They took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus." Acts 4:13.

HYMNS: "O Jesus, King Most Wonderful. . . ."—*Winchester, C. M.*
"O Christ, Thou Bright and Morning Star. . ."—*Morgensterne, C. M.*

William Orlando Carrington, the gifted negro poet-preacher, says in his great sermon, "*Carry a Little Honey,*" that we should not let die of age the beautiful parable of the ancient Persian poet and moralist, Saadi. In this legend a piece of clay was asked if it were some rare or priceless perfume. The reply was that it was just a bit of common clay. When further pressed for the secret of its rare perfume, the clay modestly said, "I have companied all the summer with the rose."

All Companionship Is Transforming.

It is a matter of common knowledge that all companionship is transforming, though the full significance of this fact does not grip us as it should. In my childhood days I heard I Corinthians 13:33 quoted far more than we do today, "evil communications corrupt good manners." The wording in the Revised Version would be far more meaningful, "evil companionships corrupt good morals." All too often we use words like these as a warning against the corrupting influence of the wrong sort of companionship, little realizing that ALL companionship is exercising its transforming power upon us, by degrees that are almost imperceptible.

As little as we may realize it our non-human companions are making their marks upon us. History is being written today more from the viewpoint of Geography and Economics than it is from the "Great Man" theory of Thomas Carlyle. Mountains, rivers, seas, winds, breezes, rocks and stones, deserts and icy wastes all leave their mark upon their companions. Few of us have not thrilled at the story of *The Great Stone Face* and its transforming effect upon a growing lad, who allowed himself to come under its full spell.

"Time would fail" to tell of the transforming effect of the books upon our shelves, as they look down upon us, to say nothing of their power when we open their pages. Our arts, our music, our hobbies, our gardens and all the things that go to make up our daily environment are, too, making their impressions upon us. It is even said that a walk across certain college campuses, or other significant spots, will make an ineffable mark upon us. But our chief concern is with our human companionships and their transforming power over us.

As a tiny child I used to like to watch the ants as they would meet one another in their busy lanes of traffic. Sometimes they would transfer a load to another and re-trace their steps. Sometimes they would appear to meet for a moment of conversation. I used to wonder what they said. I have often seen them turn around and go again on their mission whatever it was. So it is in life. We touch another life for even so short a period and something happens.

Personality makes its impression upon us in direct ratio to its power. Jesus by purely human standards, we believe, is the greatest personality that has ever walked beneath the Father's shining stars. He is forever History's outstanding example of the transforming power of companionship. Twelve men companied with Him for about 18 months, or three years at most. He so influenced these men that the world since has never been quite the same. Even the one who seems to have least caught His spirit was touched or transformed sufficiently to return the silver pieces and to cast them upon the pavement floor of the temple, weeping bitter tears over his own perfidy.

Little children instinctively flocked to Jesus of Nazareth. Soldiers and politicians came under the sway of his personality and companionship. Somehow he swayed even the wife of Pontius Pilate. The very heart of our Christian faith and message is that this same Galilean Carpenter still by the gentle witchery of his presence is slowly and silently transforming not only individual hearts but the social fabric as well.

The Character His Companionship Produces.

These peasant Galilean fishermen were "unlearned and ignorant men," that is they were non-college and non-seminary trained preachers, private citizens without official religious standing. Yet they were more than a match for their learned adversaries. Something had happened to these men. They had somehow come upon an added "plus" of power from some source. Luke says "they marvelled and took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus." This seemed to him and them a sufficient explanation for the change that had come over them. Three things stand out in the character such a companionship with Jesus had produced upon these men.

1. *A Living Knowledge Of God.* The Jews had a noble history and tradition behind them in the worship of Jehovah. But as so often happens their worship and religion had become formal and stereotyped. In their zeal for the letter of the law and the correct ritual, they had lost most of the spirit of the Prophets and the Poets, the foundation upon which our Christian faith is built. Jesus spoke with an authority that was his own, cutting through the tedious formality of rabbinical citations. As is frequently said religion

is caught rather than taught. From Jesus' words and actions they saw that God was intensely real to him. He in turn taught them to say, "Our Father," bringing the Divine Companionship close to man.

2. *Freed From Fear of Man.* Peter was thoroughly courteous in his reply but "filled with the Holy Ghost" he tells them plainly "that by the name of Jesus of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand before you whole." He does not mince words with them and the historian adds that in view of the evidence of the cured man, "they could say nothing against it."

3. *Opening Their Lips.* As a further result of the power that came upon them from their companionship with the Risen Lord, this same Apostle who a short while back was stammering, cursing and denying his Master, was now not only boldly preaching a Risen Christ to the multitudes but accusing their leaders of murdering the Lord of Glory.

The Impression Such Character Makes.

The secret of the power of our Christian Message is that we are not relating ancient incidents as to how God dealt with his followers in the glorious days of a far distant past. On the other hand we are proclaiming abiding principles of a timeless message. Each believer in his own way can company with the Master. His transforming force will be all but unconscious on our part. We may come down from our mountain-top experiences not realizing the fact that our faces are shining with a Light not seen on land or sea.

A marked Biblical example of this transforming companionship can be seen in the experience of Stephen, one of the deacons in the infant church, who first crowned his faith with his own life blood. Upon the occasion of his arrest, "the council looking stedfastly on him, saw his face as it had been the face of an angel." Later when they rushed on him with the cruel stones "he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge"—almost the very words, at least the same spirit of his Master upon the cross. Luke closes the chapter with these simple words, "And when he had said this, he fell asleep."

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, grant us the grace to transform our attitude toward the gifts of Thy love. Help us to discern our shortcomings in their true light while there is yet time. Grant us forgiveness for our sins, open our eyes to that which is needful in Thy sight.

Thou hast placed us in an environment of peace and plenty, and we implore forgiveness for our selfish lack of gratitude for these abiding gifts. Send Thou the Holy Spirit into our hearts to awaken us to the imperative needs of the hour. Help us to forget our own comforts and aims in the greater cause of salvation for Thy children among men. We ask in Jesus's Name. Amen.

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

The Gospel is Taken into Europe.

LESSON: Acts 15:36—18:21. Print Acts 16:6-15.

GOLDEN TEXT: "Come over into Macedonia, and help us." Acts 16:9.

DEVOTIONAL READING: Philippians 4:4-9.
INTER. & SR. TOPIC: The Gospel Preached in Europe.
Y. P. & ADULTS: The Gospel Enters Europe.

When the conference in Jerusalem was over Paul and Barnabas returned to Antioch with the decision of the Council. Paul proposed to Barnabas that they re-visit the Churches in Asia Minor. Barnabas agreed and wished to take with them his cousin, John Mark, who had started with them on their former journey but had returned home when they began to enter upon the dangerous and difficult part of their tour. Paul refused. They separated as friends. Barnabas takes John and Paul chooses Silas as his companion. Thus God overruled this event to the furtherance of the Gospel. Henceforth, there were to be two streams of missionary influence instead of one and all of the persons concerned did good work for the cause.

Paul and Silas came first to Derbe and then to Lystra, where Timothy lived. Timothy became Paul's life-long helper and friend. Passing from church to church Paul and Silas confirmed and established them in faith and life.

It was when Paul turned west that the course of Christian Empire began its westward sweep. Our ancestors became Christians because Paul heard and heeded the Macedonian call.

The city of Philippi was about ten miles from Neapolis, located on the River Gangites. There was probably no synagogue in the city and so Paul went to a riverside prayer meeting. Here he testified of Christ and the first convert in Europe was a woman named Lydia. As soon as she heard the Gospel, she believed, made public profession of her faith and was baptized; her household, including her children, her servants, all of these were included in the phrase, "and her household." She was a woman of open heart, open mind, open mouth, open hand and open house.

A few women and four weatherbeaten travellers talking together by the banks of the rushing river. How scornfully the great folk of Philippi would have smiled if they had been told that the chief title of their city to be remembered at all would be the presence in it of that one insignificant Jew and his letter to the Church founded on that morning. Christian work is great, however small it may seem. Notice also the quiet, gentle manner in which Lydia was born into the Kingdom of Heaven, in contrast to the other Philippian families whose conversion is recorded in the same chapter. Notice also the prominent part taken by women in the founding of this Church. When Paul was in prison at Rome in the year 62 he wrote his famous letter to this Church. That Church was always very dear to Paul. Their love toward him was deep and sincere. Their generosity was always great and they never forgot his need.

TOPICS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE'S SOCIETIES

CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR: Y. P.—Church Today. In Europe. Lam. 1:5. II Cor. 4:17.
Jr.—Children in the Bible. How God Uses Them. Miriam and Moses. Ex. 2:1-10.
LUTHER LEAGUE: Sr.—Responsibilities of American Youth. Matt. 22:15-21.
Y. P.—A Free Church in a Free State. The Christian Citizen. Matt. 22:15-21.
Inter.—Good Citizenship. Matt. 22:15-21.
WALTHER LEAGUE: July Topic—Our Schools. As Character Builders.

JULY, SECOND SUNDAY

CALL TO WORSHIP: "Rejoice in the Lord, ye who worship by the Spirit of God, and glory in Christ Jesus."
PSALM: 33.
PRELUDE: Communion—*Dubois.*
ANTHEM: Just As I Am—*Thompson.*
OFFERTORY: Berceuse—*Delbruck.*
POSTLUDE: Andante Grazioso—*Smart.*
OFFERTORY SENTENCE: "Surely every man at his best estate is altogether vanity—he heapeth up riches and knoweth not who shall gather them." Psa. 39.
OFFERTORY PRAYER: We are come to Thee in all humility with a portion of Thy gifts to us. Accept these offerings to Thy use, and bless us in Thy service. Amen.
BENEDICTION: "The world passeth away, and the lust thereof; but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever." Depart in peace. Amen.

SERMONS

Fifth Sunday After Trinity.

THEME: ***The Ministry of God in Nature.***

ALBERT W. PALMER, D. D., President Chicago Theological Seminary.

TEXT: "Speak to the earth, and it shall teach thee." *Job* 12:8.
HYMNS: "There is a green hill far away. . . ."—*Stebbins, C. M.*
"If, on a quiet sea. . . ."—*State Street, S. M.*

How rarely anything in nature is ugly, except where man has interfered and scarred the landscape with his arbitrary patterns, his straight lines, his coal smoke, his ungainly buildings and his billboards! But the bird's nest, the flowing lines of an elm tree, the snow crystal, the sapphire green of a mountain lake, are always marvelous in their harmonious beauty of line and color.

Closely akin to this beauty in nature is the widespread happiness and joy which characterize all living things. No wonder the poet's heart dances with the daffodils, for how joyously radiant the flowers are! Watch a wild animal out in the open, a deer, alert with curiosity, a chipmunk leaping from log to log, a humming bird poised above a flower—what eager grace, what exquisite delicacy and balance, what joyous fulfillment of function! And this joyous exuberant vitality on the one hand and quiet poise and tranquillity of nature on the other, are communicable to man, as all nature mystics have borne witness and as many of the rest of us just ordinary people have come to know. As John Muir says: "Climb the mountains and get their good tidings. Nature's peace will flow into you as sunshine flows into trees. The winds will blow their own freshness into you and the storms their energy, while cares will drop off like autumn leaves."

But, someone cries out, your picture of nature is incomplete! You have left out the tragic note and have forgotten that nature can be ruthless as well as beautiful and is often "red in tooth and claw." The humming bird, exquisite in color and glorious in the poetry of motion, will some day be torn to bloody fragments, for practically all animals die tragic deaths. What about the beauty and gladness of nature then?

The answer is that we must remember that nature is not, in itself, a completely adequate or wholly satisfactory path to God. It gives us a clear and decisive word that this is a living universe, with energy, vitality, beauty and

joy, in general, pervading it; but it raises questions in the human mind which are never settled in the realm of nature alone, questions of suffering and pain and personal values. It seems ruthlessly indifferent to the survival of the individual; and overwhelms, with what appears to be utter impartiality, the saint and the sinner, the hero and the villain. But this indifference is not complete. The man who lives with Nature, understands her moods and adapts himself to her ways, is by this very conformity molded to a certain largeness and nobility of soul, saved from certain petty sins, and finds courage, sincerity and perseverance rising up within him to match the elemental forces of the mountains or the sea, with which his life is interwoven. The sailor and the mountaineer are not devoid of evil ways, but their sins are not the product of the environment in which they mainly live, while their characteristic virtues certainly are stimulated and encouraged by it. If close contact with nature tends to make men generous, honest, brave and resourceful, this is an item to be remembered.

Moreover, on her higher levels, Nature gives more than hints of an awakening moral consciousness. I watched, one summer day, a pair of birds care for their little ones in a nest upon the porch where I was writing. It took high courage and devotion for them to brave the presence of a man, and there was abundant evidence of fear; but the little pair of loyal parents never faltered, returning with almost clock-like regularity to feed the hungry gaping mouths of their most unattractive looking children. Here, on her highest levels, Nature was developing loyalty, courage, parental love—the very basic elements in moral character. Nor can we leave out of the picture the effect that nature has upon the most sensitive human consciousness, upon the nature mystic and the poet. There must be something of profound value and reality in that which can produce, for example, such a spiritual experience as is recorded in Grace Hazard Conkling's poem, "After Sunset"—

"I have an understanding with the hills
At evening when the slanted radiance fills
Their hollows, and the great winds let them be,
And they are quiet and look down at me.
Oh, then I see the patience in their eyes
Out of the centuries that made them wise.
They lend me hoarded memory, and I learn
Their thoughts of granite and their whims of fern,
And why a dream of forests must endure
Though every tree be slain; and how the pure,
Invisible beauty has a word so brief
A flower can say it or a shaken leaf,
But few may ever snare it in a song,
Though for the quest a life is not too long.
When the blue hills grow tender, when they pull
The twilight close with gesture beautiful,
And shadows are their garments, and the air
Deepens, and the wild veery is at prayer,—
Their arms are strong around me; and I know
That somehow I shall follow when you go
To the still land beyond the evening star,
Where everlasting hills and valleys are:
And silence may not hurt us any more:
And terror shall be past, and grief, and war."

Let me try to sum it all up in a bit of personal experience. While pastor at Oak Park I used to preach each Sunday morning a children's sermon. One Sunday I planned to preach on birds, and that very morning, as I went over to the church, I found on the doorstep the cold stiff body of a little bird. I picked it up and thought: "How terrible! How can I ever preach to these children about the birds that Jesus loved, with the memory of this poor little bird lying dead upon the very steps of the sanctuary." And then it came to me: "Both you and the children must learn to face the facts of the universe!" And after an hour in my study I ended by taking the bird in my hands into the pulpit and as the little folks gathered around me I showed them the dead bird, led them to admire its delicate colors, its graceful body, its exquisite throat, its clinging little feet. I spoke of its power of song, its strong little heart and wonderful wings, its love for its mate and devotion to its little ones. And then I said: "I do not know how it came to die, but I am sure that it came to live because there is something beautiful and brave and loving at the heart of the universe that produced it—and that something is God."

There are voices in the world of religious thought today seeking to tell us that there is no basis for religion in the cosmic order; that the material universe is a relentless mechanism or a blind chaos—part of a dark, unmoral, unintelligent background; and that God is to be found, if he is found at all, only as a finite God struggling like ourselves with fate and chaos and evil, the "given" conditions of his life as of ours. I cannot conceive that such a separation of God from nature can ever satisfy the man who has slept outdoors beneath the stars, or lived in mountain canyons far from men, or pushed his canoe out into the hallowed hush and holy calm of a rock-encircled, pine-surrounded lake. No, rather admit that there are mysteries and even tragedies in nature, problems our finite minds cannot resolve, but nevertheless, the man who knows nature well will find the overwhelming balance on the side of beauty, joy, and spiritual communion.

Only a cosmic God is adequate to meet the facts of life and command our worship and our awe. That there should be areas of mystery in such a God, that his completer revelation should need also the full flowering of humanity, may well be true. Nature is not his only word. What I mean is this: The universe is not indifferent to suffering and pain and I know this because mankind is not indifferent to it—for mankind is part of the universe! When the universe rises to the human level, it protests against evil, it cries out against pain, it suffers and, as it suffers, it lifts its protest against the suffering it sees.

There is a beautiful story told by Honore Wilson Morrow about Kemah, an Indian chief who lost two sons in an accident. At first he was angry and bitter against the Great Spirit. But at last he thought it through, and a great peace settled down upon his heart. "It is best," he said. "How can you say that?" said another. "Well," said Kemah, "Great Spirit won't change way of whole world just for Injuns. He say 'Let Injun learn, poor fool.' All same He sorry for Injun." "Yes," sneered the other, "Great Spirit must be heap sorry. How you know He sorry?" "Because," said Kemah, "Great

Spirit in me feel sorry. Great Spirit in Obob, in Ochee, in Molly sorry. He is in us, so he must be sorry too. MUST BE!"

What could be more simple, yet more profound! Human protest against evil, sin and pain is the voice of the Great Spirit, crying out that these things are not ultimate and final, that they are not here because of mere indifference, that even out of them may come the next step forward in the great drama of the universe.

As Don Marquis has put it in these lines packed with spiritual insight:

> "He builds himself of the passion of martyrs,
> And he is woven of the ecstasy of great lovers,
> And he is wrought of the anguish of them that
> have greatly needed him."

It is as man on the human level tries to meet the problem of evil that he finds himself driven beyond nature to God, and especially to God as revealed in Jesus Christ.

PRAYER

Open Thou our eyes to the great gifts of Thy abiding love and concern for the children of Thy creation. Help us to discover Thee in all that is about us, in the common things of life, in the pleasant things of life, in the trials and irksome paths through which Thou dost lead us.

Give us grateful hearts for each and every test with which Thou dost confront our abilities, and lead us to understand Thy guiding hand in our hourly choices, so that we may avoid the stumbling by-paths which lead to disgrace and sinfulness. We ask in Jesus' Name. Amen.

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

Christianity Expands in Asia.

LESSON: Acts 19:1—21:17. Print Acts 19:8-10, 23-32.
GOLDEN TEXT: "So mightily grew the word of the Lord and prevailed." Acts 19:20.
DEVOTIONAL READING: Ephesians 2:1-10.
INTER. & SR. TOPIC: The Gospel Stirs a City.
Y. P. & ADULTS: When Religion and Business Clash.

Acts 19:1-7 describes how Paul on his third missionary journey returned to Ephesus as he had promised. See chapter 18:21. Here he found a company of about a dozen men, believers in Christ, but baptized only with John's baptism of repentance. Paul laid his hands upon them and they received the Holy Spirit. This new and mighty power made them feel the presence and love of God, inspired them to speak the truth which God gave them, and enabled them to speak with tongues. The abiding presence and mighty power of the Holy Spirit is that manifestation which comes latest to complete all that has been given before.

Chapter 19:8-17. For three months Paul preached at Ephesus in a Jewish synagogue. Driven from that point he preached for two years in the lecture room of a professor named Tyrannus. All of this time Paul was laboring

as a tentmaker, earning his daily bread with his hands and during this time, also, Ephesus was becoming more and more a center of the evangelization of the entire province of Asia through the assistance of his helpers, Timothy, Erastus and Titus, and Ephesus was considered the center of magic and witchcraft and these special powers given to Paul enabled him to conquer these evil forces in their own stronghold.

Chapter 19:18-20 describes the sacrifices made for the Gospel's sake. Among the converts were those who used and made and sold heathen charms and books. Emphasize at this point the tragic influence of bad books and indecent literature upon our contemporary life. Point out also that one converted to Christ must be willing to leave behind him all bad business and whatever else is hindering his Christian life and influence. Verses 21 and 22 indicate the broad outlook which Paul had upon the work in which he was engaged. Verses 23-27 indicate how the Gospels interfered with ungodly gain. The saloon keeper makes the same argument against temperance and prohibition laws. Politicians sometimes oppose civil service reform and the purification of the politics of our cities on exactly the same basis.

So great was the excitement that a riot followed. See verses 27-34. There was one other motive ranged alongside that of money-making and that was the injury to their so-called religion. Sometimes this is more powerful and exciting than the question of gain.

Some authorities interpret I Cor. 13:32 as indicating that Paul literally fought for his life with wild beasts in the arena.

Opposition to the truth is always in vain. Ephesus and her temple has passed away. The old theatre is a mass of ruins but the Gospel which Paul preached is conquering the world and never so strong or so widely spread as it is today.

TOPICS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE'S SOCIETIES

CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR: Y. P.—Church Today. In the Orient? Dan. 7:13-14. Matt. 5:11-12.
Jr.—God Uses Children. Samuel. I Sam. 3:1-10.
LUTHER LEAGUE: Sr.—Christian Character. The Narrow Way. Matt. 7:13-14.
Y. P.—State and Church (Attitude and Action). Deut. 17:14.
Inter.—Trees. Rev. 22:2.
WALTHER LEAGUE: July Topic—Our Schools. Discussion. Responsibility of parents in child training. Secular and Religious, comparison of time spent on each.

FOR THE BULLETIN BOARD

You can't practice economy by cheating yourself or another.
You don't have to preach honesty where its benefits are known.
You do not waste your breath talking with God.
You do not waste your time waiting upon God.
It is the deaf ear that doesn't hear.
Choice rather than chance picks your way ahead.
To achieve one must believe, in any direction.
Do not let well enough alone.

JULY, THIRD SUNDAY

CALL TO WORSHIP: "I will sing of the loving kindness of Jehovah forever; with my mouth will I make known Thy faithfulness to all generations."
PSALM: 29.
PRELUDE: Prelude—*Saint Saens.*
ANTHEM: Awake Up My Glory—*Rogers.*
OFFERTORY: La Gondoliera—*Lawrence.*
POSTLUDE: March—*Udden.*
OFFERTORY SENTENCE: "Now in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some unto honour, and some unto dishonour. If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, meet for the Master's use, prepared unto every good work."
OFFERTORY PRAYER: Heavenly Father, rest our hearts and hopes in Thee. Save us from the bitterness of selfish motives and sinking of hopes. Speed the day when we shall find joy in Thy service, and hope in brotherly love. Accept these our earthly tokens of our faith in Thy goodness.
BENEDICTION: "Now I beseech you, children, through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions amongst you; but that ye be perfected together in the same mind and in the same judgment." I Cor. 1:10.

SERMON

Sixth Sunday After Trinity.

THEME: *Behind Strange Doors.*

EWART H. WYLE.

TEXT: "For I say unto you, that unless your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the Kingdom of Heaven." Matt. 5:20.
HYMNS: "God calling yet! Shall I not hear. . . ."—*Hamburg, L. M.*
"I heard the voice of Jesus say . . ."—*Vox Dilecti, C. M. D.*

A youth comes into a physician's office and becomes subjected to a hypodermic injection for the purpose of immunizing him from some particular disease. As I have thought of that very common occurrence, I find in it a parallel, often totally unsuspected, to the experience of many of us today. What had happened was that the physician had injected a small portion of the disease into the blood stream of his patient. That small portion when properly administered, will make it practically impossible for one to become affected by the larger ailment. In much the same way, many of our church members have become so accustomed to some phase of Christian practice that they have become practically immunized from that radiant passion that possesses the souls of all those truly consecrated to Jesus Christ our Lord.

Movements that have ceased to recognize the leadership of Christ are sweeping our world. Perhaps they may lead us to a glorious victory, for the pages of history teach us that the Church has always achieved most in days of persecution. Never, not even in the days of the prophets of Israel was the challenge greater than just now. For centuries the Church has talked about barriers that keep us from Christ, and these are tremendously important. Let me mention but two of these barriers to a richer life, barriers that are so close to our doors that we often fail to recognize them.

1. *The first of these is service.* In our desire to awaken the Church of today to its full responsibilities, we must sound again the words of Jesus:

"Unless your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees." Jesus does not condemn either the scribe or the Pharisee in these words, He merely says that their standard was not sufficient for His followers. In exactly the same way, many of the things we are doing are all right in so far as we go—they just aren't our best. A bullet fired here and a shout rendered there has beguiled many of us into a sense of well-being—while the Battle of the Centuries, in the name of Christ, is in progress.

It is Leslie Weatherhead who illustrates just what I mean by the barrier of service. Two brothers were playing, when, in a fit of anger, the older struck his younger brother. He was distressed by the look of sorrow that came over his mother's face. So he offered to run a needed errand for her, but at its completion, he noticed that her face was unchanged. Then he thought of a coin, all his very own, and determined to spend it on her. But the little gift made little difference in her face. Then he sat down with her as she knitted and talked to her in the hope that her mind would rest on something other than the unpleasant episode. But this was of no avail. Then, with the tears running down his face, he threw his arms around her neck and cried, "Oh mummy, I'm sorry, won't you forgive me?" Then it was that the sunshine of her forgiveness drove the clouds of sorrow from her face.

Many of us are serving in the church, attending the worship services, supporting the Community Chest, contributing to the Red Cross, the Boy Scouts and numerous other worthwhile ventures because we are trying to "make it up" to God. On a larger scale than most of us live, a recent five-and-ten cent store magnate, made a death-bed bequest of an enormous amount of money to endow a home for broken working girls. During the years of his great success he hadn't counted the cost of thousands of under-paid working girls whom he had exploited. He had built a hospital at the base of the cliff rather than a fence at the top.

The important question is, "Why do you serve, and, how?" The Pharisees served, but Jesus said it wasn't enough—their service lacked wholehearted consecration. Dwight L. Moody once said that he preached the same sermons in his later life as in his comparatively unsuccessful younger years. The difference was in the consecration of the man. Only when a man gives his best to Christ first is his service blessed. What was the difference in the Moses that guarded the sheep of the Midianite priest and the man who boldly asked Pharaoh for the freedom of the Hebrew people? Outwardly they were the same. The difference lay in the consecration to a God whose presence became a living reality. I am wondering if this simple statement doesn't give us a clue to the question mark raised over many a decaying church today.

2. The second barrier is even more astounding than the first. *It is the barrier of religion.* Again let me refer to the Pharisees. They are known throughout the pages of history for their religious zealousness. But it didn't satisfy Jesus. The joy of religion, as Jesus knew it, was lost to the Pharisees in layers of forms and formulae. It was a religion of the outer senses, not a passion of the heart. The very form of religion that we practise has become

an inoculation that has made us largely immune from the experience of men like Paul and Peter.

There is a tendency to feel that the outward expression to which we have grown accustomed is sufficient—nay more—that it is the ultimate. There is a close parallel between the Pharisee of yesterday and the multitude of Pharisees who assemble weekly in some House of Prayer.

Leslie Weatherhead describes two girls. One was the child of an elder in the church, the other of a gypsy camp. The one girl, Alice, had always gone to church and Sunday School, until the habit of the years brought the activities of the Church into her life as a matter of course. All the ideals of the Church were passed to her. Angela had been taught to lie and steal. To her the standards of life were the very opposite from those of Alice. Yet each had something in common—each was the product of her environment, for each had followed the course of least resistance. Life was more or less modelled for each girl. Later, Alice married a young man who cared little about church and she failed to attend church following her marriage. Alice had never had a personal experience of religion. She had been content with a formula of religion as set down by her parents. However, both girls were later converted. Angela was the easier to reach of the two. She had never had a religious inoculation.

An experience of Jesus Christ can never come by proxy, a normal reason why many of our young people lose an interest in the church in their later adolescent years. A prominent minister said in an address to a group of parents, "Don't blame our colleges when your youngsters seem to lose their religion. The truth of the matter is that many of them never had any religion to lose." For too long a period we have echoed Peter's words, "Repent and be baptized," eagerly following the latter admonition, but completely ignoring the former.

Hiding behind strange doors. It has been common to all ages. But Jesus dealt very specifically with those scribes and Pharisees. One word describes his method, He dealt with them violently. He called them hypocrites and vipers. He put a sword in their heart and then turned it. It hurt—but it helped. It was the only way to show those complacent men the error of their ways. In the same way, we need to emulate the Great Teacher from our pulpits. These are days for truths, not soothsaying. These are days for courage, not cowardly back-slapping.

Let us test ourselves by an easy method. As you attend divine worship, what do the hymns and prayers mean to you? Are they glowing words from the heart of a hymn-writer, penned that you might share the ecstasy that entered his heart? Is the prayer but a routine to be suffered by a congregation? Or is it a reaching out to God, and an echoing of the feeling of your heart? Is the reading of the Scriptures a revival of God's searching heart? Or is it all "old stuff," sermons by the same voice, prayers to the same God, Scripture that has become wearisome through frequent reading? This simple test will open your eyes to yourself. If the Church of the Living God does not inspire you with a sense of awe, be sure my friend that you have not experienced Christ, you have merely been inoculated and have become well nigh impossible for the glorious passion of the Christian life.

John Wesley's mission to the Indians of Georgia was a comparative failure when compared with the blazing comet that awakened England to a richer spiritual heritage. The change came when he stood face to face with God

at Aldersgate. As he went home that evening he said, "I knew that He had forgiven me, had taken away my sin, had saved me."

How simply Jesus has expressed the thought of this message in the words: "He that seeketh His life shall lose it, but he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it."

God is calling. Let no barrier, no strange door keep us from heeding His call.

PRAYER

Open Thou our hearts, O Heavenly Father, to the joys of fellowship with Thee. Help us to see our sins both of omission and commission, so that true repentance may be granted to us, foregathering a new insight into that which Thou hast in store for us. Help us to lift the cloud of indifference which has enveloped so many of us, help us to see beyond the mere physical comforts of this hour into the great and lasting things of life which are of Thy making.

Give us grateful hearts for all Thy tender mercies toward us in the days of opportunity that have been taken into the fold of history, and grant us the grace and wisdom to follow Thy leading into the days ahead. We ask in Jesus' Name. Amen.

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

The Responsibility of the Church Regarding Beverage Alcohol.

LESSON: I Cor. 5:9-12; Titus 2:1-8.
GOLDEN TEXT: Ye are the salt of the earth. Matt. 5:13.
DEVOTIONAL READING: Colossians 3:1-14.
INTER. & SR. TOPIC: What Our Group Can Do About Liquor.
Y. P. & ADULTS: The Church's Duty in Regard to Liquor.

In his first letter to the Corinthians Paul had strenuously enjoined the avoidance of contaminating intercourse. His counsel had been misconstrued, partly perhaps in all good faith by the ascetic party in their zeal for moral purity, and partly also by the libertines in their resentment of moral restraint. The misunderstanding of his counsel had reached the Apostle's ears and he now proceeds to correct it and to explain that he had not referred to the inevitable intercourse of human society but to the fellowship of the Church.

This in brief is an explanation of verses 9-13 of the lesson today. Many churches have strict rules of discipline in regard to the dealing of the Church with those of their members who are guilty of the sin of intemperance.

Nowhere and no time, however, can the Church escape responsibility for a clear and constantly distinct word in regard to beverage alcohol. Alcohol by a strange Satanic chemistry destroys first the very highest qualities in a man's life, the qualities of mind, of moral perception, qualities which have come into the life of the race later, those which have to do with self-control, with moral rectitude, with a clear discerning of right and wrong, the qualities which differentiate most sharply between man and the brute.

The Church should continually and fearlessly fight the battle for temperance. The fact that politicians lay hold on the issue and make of it all too

often a political football should not frighten the Church nor cause her to silence her voice. At root, and finally, the question is one of morality and as such the Church has a duty to deal with it. It can maintain a silence only through betrayal of its trust. The preacher who fears to speak on this topic from his pulpit and who gives by his silence an acquiesence in the nefarious traffic, is betraying his duty.

TOPICS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE'S SOCIETIES

CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR: Y. P.—The Church in America? Matt. 24:4-14. Rom. 5:1-5.
Jr.—God Uses Children. Lad with the Lunch. John 6:1-14.
LUTHER LEAGUE: Sr.—Race Prejudice, Cause? Col. 3:11.
Y. P.—Church and State. Rom. 13:1-7.
Inter.—Mountains. Psa. 125:1-2.
WALTHER LEAGUE: July Topic, Our Schools. Are Parochial Schools advisable? What is Aim? Teacher Personnel. Taxes. What is our responsibility in creating sentiment for more thorough Religious and Character Training? Better Citizenship Training.

FOR THE BULLETIN BOARD

Happiness can't be separated from goodness.
We grow old in sin or young in the Lord.
The struggle to win is still the greater prize.
Why argue about religion if you haven't one?
Something is wrong inside when Jesus is kept outside.
Nothing is so gloriously regal as truth.
Truth is being, not seeming.
Compensation always waits along the way, be it good or bad.
Victory hardly comes to the discouraged.

JULY, FOURTH SUNDAY

CALL TO WORSHIP: "Make a joyful noise unto God, all ye lands; sing forth the honour of His name, make His praise glorious."
PSALM: 8.
PRELUDE: Twilight Serenade—*Sheppard.*
ANTHEM: God of The Nations—*Branscombe.*
OFFERTORY: Pastorale in A—*Meckel.*
POSTLUDE: Allegro Pomposo.
OFFERTORY SENTENCE: "Honour Jehovah with thy substance, and with the first fruits of all thine increase. So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy vats shall overflow with new wine."
OFFERTORY PRAYER: Heavenly Father, Who didst bestow these gifts upon us, receive and bless our offerings this day. Guide us in the use of our blessings and prosper Thy work. We ask in Jesus' Name. Amen.
BENEDICTION: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with thy spirit.

SERMON

Seventh Sunday After Trinity.
THEME: *The Voice of the Church.*

WILLIAM F. ROTHENBURGER, D. D.

SCRIPTURE: Num. 10:29-31. Matt. 11:25-30.
TEXT: Matt. 11:28.
HYMNS: "The Church's one foundation . . ."—*Aurelia,* 76, 76, *D.*
"Jesus, with Thy Church abide."—*Litany,* 777, 6.

The world is constantly flaunting before us multiple invitations to buy something, to join something, or to go somewhere. Whether one walks the streets, reads the daily paper, or turns the dial on the radio, the story is the same.

The Bible, too, is full of invitations and promises. Out of the Old Testament I draw but one of many—"Come with us and we will do thee good." Out of the New Testament another—"Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Because we are all anxious to make the most of life, let us study for awhile a very striking and timely incident of almost four thousand years ago.

Israel's Experience

Moses had successfully led the people of Israel out of Egypt and freed them from a long and hard period of bondage. Their objective was the land of the Canaanites, which God had promised them as a permanent home.

But they were an inexperienced people. For the greater part of a year they were whipped into shape for the march through the wilderness toward their goal. Moses gave them the Ten Commandments. He organized the priesthood, a form of worship, and built the portable tabernacle.

As they are about to break camp for the long trek through the wilderness northward, Moses introduces the human element into the undertaking by soliciting Hobab to join. Hobab was a man of the wilderness and so far as we know made a valuable contribution to that great pilgrimage. Moses himself never entered the Promised Land, and perhaps Hobab never did. But the world has never forgotten the part that Moses played in the drama

which made Israel a great people. Out of Israel came a long line of prophets, a rich literature, the highest moral and ethical code of life for that day, and finally the Christian Church with Christ as its Founder. What Moses and Hobab did has influenced the whole world.

The Church's Experience

Now, after four thousand years from that incident, we are part of another great movement—The Church. The Church is a divine institution. It has no cloud or pillar of fire to testify to the presence of God, but it has Christ who leads. "I am the light of the world." It has "his spirit to bear witness with our spirits that we are the sons of God."

The Church, too, has an objective. To be sure, we look toward a heavenly Canaan. But the immediate objective is to bring the heavenly ideals down to earth. Therefore, we pray—"Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." It is the Church's business to make the world a better place in which to live. Its purpose is to get rid of greed and to produce such a state of mind as will leave no place for brutal war, for unbrotherliness, injustice of any kind. That is the goal of the Church, and to the accomplishment of this goal it says to men and women, "Come with us."

When a man commits himself to a great cause, it does something with him and for him. The records in the book of Judges (1:16), after they had settled down in Canaan, refer to the descendants of Hobab. At first he felt he could not uproot the associations of his boyhood for what seemed a movement of uncertainty. But Moses promised that if he would join them they would do him good. It meant to forsake other gods for Jehovah. It meant a higher moral and social standard of living. It meant to adopt a new objective and a new standard of values. It was a great venture, but no man ever ventures to serve God without tremendous benefit to himself.

To become a Christian is a great venture. Paul was a living example of that great adventure. When Jesus, this new Prophet arose, Saul stoutly resisted him. He sought to persecute his followers. He entered the city of Damascus as Saul, the ardent and dangerous Jew. He left it as Paul, the apostle. He went to kill, but he stayed to preach.

That was a great venture. It meant the uprooting of all his social, religious, and educational life. But like Hobab, after fighting against it for a time, he succumbed and became the apostle to the Gentiles. Paul never regretted it. No man, save Jesus himself, ever paid a higher price for his convictions, but no man ever regretted it less or relished it more. During his marvelous career of preaching, teaching, and evangelizing, he was pounded and left for dead in Asia Minor, shipwrecked, and twice imprisoned. Finally, as an old man, he writes, "I have fought the good fight." What it did for Saul, it has done for countless others. It will do it for you.

Again, to join a great spiritual movement one can use all his natural powers and accomplishments. While some criticize Moses for inviting Hobab to join the march because he knew the wilderness, I am one who agrees that it was a wise and practical stroke on the part of Moses to use Hobab's knowledge of the wilderness. When Saul became a Christian, he brought with him

into play his splendid education, his strong personality, and his indomitable will.

When anyone answers the call to follow Christ, he brings into play all his powers and possessions. What better use can be made of a good voice than singing the great musical compositions of the church? What better use can be made of the power to teach than in presenting the Word of God to youth and adults? Here is a man with executive ability. Where can that be better used? Here is one who has literary skill or a love of the beautiful in art and nature. Certainly religion should be made beautiful. Here is another with the ability to make money honestly. When Mr. R. A. Long of Kansas City made millions of dollars in the lumber business, he took it with him into the church. When he borrowed a million dollars to enlarge his business he said, "If I can take that risk for business I dare not refuse to take it for God." So he borrowed a million and put it at the disposal of his church. So it is in the great field of science—it can all be used constructively for the uplift of humanity.

The church is a movement ordained of God. It has the objective of uplifting the race. To this end it can use all of our talents and possessions. Therefore, come with us and we will do you good. In turn, you will join hands with God in saving the world from war, nationalism, hatred, social injustices, and selfishness. For mark you, Christianity will not have an easy road to travel during the next decade, regardless of the outcome of the war. It is no time for slackers or for timid programs. Rather, it is a time for the crusader's spirit, not to capture sacred places but to capture the spiritual imagination of men. It is a time, not to withdraw great missionaries from the fields but to back them with our prayers and money. It is no time to depend wholly on professional evangelists. Use them, to be sure, but every preacher and teacher, indeed every professed follower of Christ must be an evangelist, winning his Hobabs and his Pauls to Christ. Say—"Come with us and we will do thee good."

Though the Church will be severely tested, let it be remembered that its Founder said, "Upon this rock I will build my church and the gates of death shall not prevail against it." But it must, likewise, be remembered that it can be greatly weakened, not by persecution from without so much as by disloyalty within. It is said that, during the Spanish Revolution, General Franco or one of his staff was asked whether the four columns of his soldiers, who were pounding at the gates of the besieged Spanish city, could succeed in its overthrow. He replied, "No, but I have another column of traitors to the government working quietly within the city." The city could not stand against this two-fold attack. Today, many nations are watching for the "fifth column" traitors within. Those who practice the sins of the world within the church cannot be looked upon as other than traitors and members of the "fifth column" within the spiritual commonwealth of Christ. Then let the approach of every believer to his fellows with whom he touches shoulders in this uncertain and confused generation be—"Come with us and we will do thee good."

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, fill our hearts with burning desire to learn Thy will for men upon earth, not other men, but those of us here who bow our heads in worship and longing for forgiveness. Through our desire for the comforts

of life today, we have blacked out the aspirations of the Spirit in its yearning for Thee. Help us to regain that precious privilege; give us grace to confess our sins in their true light; grant us courage to face the questions of the day in their ugliness and their portentions; help us to see that only those who follow Thee are wise in the ways of life.

We thank Thee for health, for courage, for friends, for the necessities of life; we thank Thee for this house of Thine, in which we are gathered to learn of Thee. Grant us Thy courage to follow the teachings of Thy Son, Jesus Christ.

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

The Holy Spirit Inspires New Testament Letters.

LESSON: Galatians 1:11-12; I Thess. 2:13; II Timothy 3:14-17; II Peter 3:14-16; Jude 3.

GOLDEN TEXT: "Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness." II Tim. 3:16.

DEVOTIONAL READING: Psalm 19:7-14.

INTER. & SR. TOPIC: How the New Testament Letters Came to Be Written.

Y. P. & ADULTS: The Holy Spirit Inspires New Testament Letters.

There are interesting considerations to illustrate the inspired Scriptures. 1. The remarkable national history contained in the Scriptures. Everything is looked at from the standpoint of God. This is true of no other national history in the world. God is the King. It is His will which is wrought out, or defied with disastrous results, it is His blessing which results in national prosperity.

2. A constant warning voice is raised against sin, the thing which we discover in our own hearts. The prophet, the historian, are like a great tragic chorus that accompanies the presentation on the stage. Rebuke for sin is constant. Admonition to righteousness is on every page. This fact cannot be explained on the ground of the natural moral tendencies of the Hebrew people. It is an evidence of the inspiration of the record on the part of the Holy Spirit.

3. The National poetry and songs of the people. The literature of the time was corrupt. The filthiness and depravity of men and their writings was almost unbelievable. The worship of images and of fetishes abounded on every hand. The nations that surrounded Israel were given to the most filthy religious rites and ceremonies. Their national poetry and songs were vile beyond description. The wonder is not so much that the Hebrews fell occasionally into idolatry as it is that they lived habitually upon so high a moral plane. When the literature of surrounding peoples is placed side by side with that of the Hebrews and compared with Psalms 51 and 23 and other individual passages of the Bible we have a phenomenon which no sceptics can explain away.

4. These writers could not have been fanatic because of their common sense. They declared that they spoke in the Name and at the command of God. The expression "Thus saith the Lord" occurs again and again. The Lord compelled Jeremiah to preach and to write although he wanted the

security and joy of a home and family. He desired the admiration and love of his fellow countrymen but he was compelled to say unpleasant things. Amos was taken by some strange compulsion from the field to preach against his will. Hosea had the burden of an unfaithful wife but was used in that relationship as an example of God and His people. "The burden of the Lord" is spoken of again and again. These are not phenomena of ordinary history.

5. The Bible predicts the future and its predictions are fulfilled. This is an indisputable evidence of its inspiration.

6. The marvelous unity of the Book testifies to its inspiration. It was written over a period of more than sixteen hundred years by more than forty different men, widely scattered and coming from utterly different walks of life. Some of it was written in a hovel, some in a palace, some in a cell, some at the court, and yet with the most remarkable unity throughout it all.

7. Christ is the heart and center of it all. This is additional proof of its inspiration, and is most remarkable. Those of the Old Testament wrote more wisely than they themselves knew. In Him is the fulfillment of what they unknowingly wrote. "These are they which testify of Me."

8. The marvelous power of the Bible over the hearts of men. Here is another witness to its inspiration by the Holy Spirit. Carlisle said, "This Book finds me where I live." This is pragmatic. It is a demonstrable fact. Lives are transformed, souls are saved, the good are helped, and the evil reproved. A book that reproduces Heaven in the lives of men must be from Heaven.

9. It does not lose its force in translation. This is a most remarkable fact. The 23rd Psalm in the French is just as comforting as in the English or in the language of the bushmen of Africa.

10. More than a million texts are taken from it every week. Many of these texts are misapplied and misinterpreted and misread, and still the Bible lives with a vigor which nothing can diminish. It is misunderstood by its friends and still nothing can kill it. This is an interesting and sure proof of its inspiration.

11. While written in the East it still fits us. Surely holy men of old wrote as they were inspired of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit has the attributes of a person, spoken of in Scripture continually as a Person, of love, of truth, of holiness, of grace. The Holy Spirit does the work of a person—creation, regeneration, teaching, comforting.

TOPICS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE'S SOCIETIES

CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR: Y. P.—Handling Handicaps. I Cor. 10:13; 15:58. I Pet. 1:6-7.
Jr.—God Uses Children. Timothy. Acts 16:1-5. II Tim. 1:1-6.
LUTHER LEAGUE: Sr.—Missionary Life (Relate stories). II Tim. 2:1-4.
Y. P.—Missionary Life in Africa. John 6:40-50.
Inter.—Conventions.
WALTHER LEAGUE: July Topic, Schools. What Can we do to create better cooperation of Schools and Homes? Service Project, make survey of results of proper early training in home and school. Court records, success stories based on training. Make survey of equipment needed, and start fund for purchase.

AUGUST, FIRST SUNDAY

CALL TO WORSHIP: "We rejoice in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation worketh steadfastness, and steadfastness approvedness, and approvedness hope."
PSALM: 142.
PRELUDE: Idylle—*Wely.*
ANTHEM: Lift Up Your Heads—*Hopkins.*
OFFERTORY: Andantino—*Fauret.*
POSTLUDE: March of the Israelies—*Costa.*
OFFERTORY SENTENCE: "Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measures, pressed down, and taken together, and running over shall men give unto your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal, it shall be measured to you again."
OFFERTORY PRAYER: Heavenly Father, to Whom belongeth all things in Heaven and earth, help us to look upon our stewardship as a trust from Thee, and teach us the joy of giving as Thou hast given to us. Grant our prayer, in the name of Jesus, Thy good and perfect gift.
BENEDICTION: Grace, mercy and peace from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord be with you always.

SERMON

Eighth Sunday After Trinity.

THEME: *A Daily Rate for Every Day.*

PAUL G. KRUTZKY.

TEXT: "Just for Today." II Kings 25:30.
HYMNS: "Give to the winds thy fears. . . ."—*Thessalonica, S. M. D.*
"My Hope is built on nothing less. . . ."—*Melita,* 88, 88, 88.

The book from which our text is taken deals largely with the struggles of the Jewish people against their enemies. One of the Kings of Judah had been taken captive by a King of Babylon. As a rule the Jews when taken captive were harshly treated by their enemies. However, the action of this King of Babylon was an exception. Usually the nobles of the people were slain, the cities despoiled and the treasures carried away. For thirty years this King of Judah had languished in prison. Upon a succession in the kingdom of Babylon, the new King took pity on the captured King of Judah, spoke kindly to him, and improved his condition. He was given an allowance for the remainder of his life, and as our text reads, "a daily rate for every day."

The compassion of this King of Babylon is merely an imitation of the compassion which God shows to men, for it is He who puts pity and compassion in the human heart which moves us to mercy and kindness. The thought expressed in our text is therefore applicable to God's dealing with us. This attitude of His is summed up in the promise that as great as our need is so shall our strength be.

In the New Testament the Saviour often speaks of daily needs and daily grace. In the Lord's Prayer we ask for daily bread, we seek daily forgiveness of our sins. The fact that God gives us daily enough to satisfy our needs fits in with the fact that He has made us creatures of a day.

Life is not bestowed upon us in a lump, but we live from day to day. This is an important truth which we too often overlook. If men would remember this truth there would be less waste of time and more intensive living. Moreover, not only does God supply our daily needs, but He has assigned us

our work. He has sent us into the world to work by the day and not only by the job. Our pay also is to be a daily wage.

The happiest people are those who live from day to day, eating their manna fresh daily. Life is after all a little love, a little work, a little play, a little sleep. These come to us day by day, and if we color our life from day to day with the rainbow of hope in another life we shall find this life of ours worth living. Of the worth of the day, and its duties the Poet sang:

> "Today, unsullied comes to thee new-born,
> Tomorrow is not thine,
> The sun may cease to shine for thee
> Ere earth shall greet its morn.
> Be earnest then in thought and deed,
> Nor fear approaching night—
> Calm comes with evening light,
> And hope and peace—thy duty heed today."

If today and its duties are so important, and if God supplies us daily, this fact should show us the folly of living on yesterday's grace. We cannot live on the food of yesterday either in a physical or spiritual sense. If we would have physical strength we must have fresh food every day. In nature we can observe how the birds and animals are supplied daily with food.

This is just as true of the soul's needs. We cannot build up the soul on the blessings and grace received in the past. Our souls must have the manna of grace from day to day, our spiritual food must be a daily rate for every day. The author of Rock of Ages says:—"The act of breathing which I performed yesterday will not keep me alive today; I must continue to breathe afresh every moment or life ceases." In like manner yesterday's grace and spiritual strength must be renewed, and the Holy Spirit must continue to breathe on my soul from moment to moment." This should rebuke us for living too much in the future.

It is well enough to have a goal towards which to aim, for life without a purpose is only an existence. God intended that we should enjoy our life on earth otherwise He would not have given us capacities for joy and pleasure. The greatest joy in life is often working for a goal and not reaching it, for sometimes with success comes disgust. The true blessedness of mortals is after all, living day by day.

In our religion many of us misunderstand salvation. It is not only a place to be reached in the future, for already here on earth does our salvation begin. The joys in this life are but foretastes of the purer and the better joys in store for us. We think in days of doubt and dread of the bliss of getting out of this life, to the other life beyond the grave. But the real bliss of life is living it, and the hope of salvation should make us live better, nobler and truer lives.

Another thing we see in this text is a rebuke for borrowing trouble. Christ calls this sin. Every day has its measure of cares, yet every day also has its measure of grace. At the close of His sermon on the Mount Jesus tells us we should take no thought for the morrow, for the morrow would take care of the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.

Wherever we find life there we find its twin-brother, danger. Life means

struggle and activity. We are surrounded by forces which constantly threaten our life. The very air we breathe, the water we drink, the food we eat all have in them elements which are inimical to human life. And this is no less true of those forces which we call spiritual. "We wrestle not against flesh and blood, says Paul, but against principalities, against powers, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

Life is very much like riding a bicycle. When you stop you must get off or you will fall off. It is because the dangers of life are constant that men worry. No matter how well you invest your money, you cannot be absolutely sure that it will not be lost. No matter how well you are today you cannot be sure of tomorrow. Too many of us anticipate troubles, and we worry more over imaginary evils than we do over real ones. Some one has aptly said: "It is evils that never happen which make men miserable."

Our text contains not only comfort and consolation for the material man but also for the spiritual man. God gives us a daily rate of these for every day. Against the evils and dangers of every day we have His promise of help and protection. This habit of borrowing trouble is one that most of us must conquer. We are to cast our burden upon the Lord, and in due season He will help us. Our troubles will not grow less because we worry over them. There are more people killed by worry than by hard work. It is care which eats into life like a canker and takes out all the joy in living. Worry is sinful because it lacks the element of faith. In worrying we would do that which in faith God does for us. Life will always have its drawbacks and limitations. Of the two kinds of people, the optimist and the pessimist, the optimist, although he may be deceived occasionally, gets the most out of life. The materialist holds that the only real loss is the loss of money. And yet there are greater losses than money, for money is not always happiness, nor is poverty necessarily misery. The reasonable man views life as it is and not as imagination paints it. For every down there is an up; for every loss there is a gain. The tide ebbs out, but it will flow back. Over all our sorrows these words may be written: "These too shall pass." Life, in spite of its drawbacks, is good. It is a prophecy of the better life to come. The Christian who lives in dependence upon God from day to day does not fear the breaking down of the barrier between himself and God, and he does not fear death, for he has had God every step of the way from day to day.

Finally, this thought of a rate or a portion for every day reveals to us the privilege of living one day at a time. Life is a privilege too many of us forget. We look upon it too often as a burden, and long for another life. Life does not come to us in one piece. We do not get it even in years or months but in days, day by day, a day at a time. Every privilege involves a duty. If God so graciously renews our life every day, we have the duty to make the best use we can of the day that has been bestowed upon us. Life is really a continual creation.

Surely we can see, in God's method, His wisdom and goodness. If men were supplied with all they needed for a long life, how many would abuse God's goodness? Even the birds must seek that which God provides. So too must man work, for work is worship. So highly does Paul consider work, that he says that he who will not work shall not eat. And, although this

promise of material help is comforting, the thought that God will supply spiritual strength is more so. Not only do we need food for the body, but the soul needs its food. Not only do we need bodily health and strength, but also the spirit of a sound mind, patience, faith, hope and charity. The promise is especially for the Christian. We are but strangers and pilgrims here, travelling towards a home prepared for us. Let us take courage whatever our needs, our circumstances may be. The Lord is our Shepherd, we shall not want. As our days so shall our strength be. Whatever our burdens, our sufferings or our sorrows, may this thought in our text comfort us. We shall have a daily rate, every day, grace sufficient for all our needs, food for soul and body; and best of all the hope that maketh not ashamed, the hope of everlasting life by faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

PRAYER

Create in us a willingness to await Thy coming and Thy going, hour by hour and day by day. Teach us the trust and faith that will remove all doubt and anxiousness from our hearts and minds, knowing that our needs are in Thy keeping.

Give us grace to make real in our lives Thy words of comfort and fellowship, so that we may be free to follow that which Thou desirest of us. Grant us the courage to use the talents and strength Thou hast bestowed upon each and every one of us in Thy service. Grant us forgiveness for the shortcomings of the past week, so that we may start anew in the path of Thy choosing. We ask in Jesus' Name. Amen.

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

Paul Preaches Faith in Christ.

LESSON: Romans 3:21-31; 5:1-2; Gal. 3:1-29. Print Romans 3:21-31; 5:1, 2.
GOLDEN TEXT: "As it is written, but the righteous shall live by faith." Romans 1:17.
DEVOTIONAL READING: Romans 8:31-39.
INTER. & SR. TOPIC: What Faith Does for Us.
Y. P. & ADULTS: Paul Proclaims Justification by Faith.

The question which has puzzled thoughtful men through all the ages is this, How can a man be right with God? No more important question could possibly be asked, and in all the Bible there is probably no more complete and satisfying answer than in the words which form our lesson today. The answer is found in faith in Jesus Christ. In His atoning work on the cross the answer is made clear. It was something that Jesus did on the cross which made it possible for a sinful man to find peace with a righteous God. Philosophy cannot explain it. Science cannot even enter into a study of it. It lies in its mystery and profound depth beyond the range of human understanding. It is something which God Himself did and which we have only to claim by faith, to receive the benefits thereof. Here is the very heart of the Christian message. We need only to ponder these words, read them

in the light of the Old Testament, and we cannot fail to be moved by this unique expression of the grace of God in Jesus Christ.

Paul insisted that the entire world is in need of righteousness and is under the condemnation of God and yet he boldly declares that through the atoning work of Christ righteousness has been provided and is offered freely for all on the ground of faith alone. This righteousness is apart from the law. It is not secured by obeying the law. It is offered to those by whom the law has been broken. It is nothing that can be merited or earned or deserved. It is the free gift of God bestowed upon those who believe.

TOPICS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE'S SOCIETIES

CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR: Y. P.—Christian Standards in Recreation. I Cor. 10:31-33. Col. 3:17.
Jr.—Leisure, How to spend it. Rom. 13:10-13.
LUTHER LEAGUE: Sr.—Is It Always Wrong to Lie or Cheat? Eph. 4:22-29.
Y. P.—Same.
Inter.—Fish. Matt. 4:18-20.
WALTHER LEAGUE: August Topic—The Crime Problem. Criminals Classified. Wrong Notion About Criminals.

FOR THE BULLETIN BOARD

Loving the same God, how can we hate each other?
The nearer the summit the wider the view.
You have first to live with yourself.
God's smile is for him whose eyes are open.
Even with perfect sight one can be stone blind.
There is security in peace and strength in justice.
A human touch warms the soul of more than one.
To give is to live.
Are you a torchbearer along the way?

AUGUST, SECOND SUNDAY

CALL TO WORSHIP: "I am Thy servant; give me understanding, that I may know Thy testimonies." Psa. 119:125.

PSALM: 150.

PRELUDE: Meditation—*Morrison.*

ANTHEM: I Will Lift Up Mine Eyes—*Whitfield.*

OFFERTORY: Berceuse in C—*Kinder.*

POSTLUDE: Allegro—*Mendelssohn.*

OFFERTORY SENTENCE: "Say not unto thy neighbour, Go, and come again, And tomorrow I will give; When thou hast it by thee."

OFFERTORY PRAYER: Not of ourselves, Heavenly Father, do we have the grace and understanding to follow Thy commands unto eternal life, but we know that our trust in Thee will keep us in Thy path and cause us to do that which Thou wilt. Our gifts are before Thee to use as Thou wilt. Cause us to rise unto understanding with Thee. We praise Thee and glorify Thee, now and forevermore.

BENEDICTION: The God of peace Himself sanctify you wholly; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved entire, without blame, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

SERMON

Ninth Sunday After Trinity.

THEME: *An Understanding With the Hills.*

CARL S. WEIST.

TEXT: "For the Lord is a great God, and a great King above all gods. . . ." Psalm 95:3-4.

HYMNS: "Great is the Lord, our God."—*Durham, S. M.*
"Zion stands with hills surrounded. . . ."—*Holborn,* 87, 87, 47.

It was this Scripture, I think, which was the inspiration for Rodin's great work of art—the Hand of God. Reaching up through clay is a hand of loveliness and strength, grasping a bit of clay, out of which emerges the figures of a man and a woman. Oswald S. McCall in his book entitled "The Hand of God," graphically sets forth the significance of the Hand.

"In his hand are the deep places of the earth; the strength of the hills is his also."

The strength of the hills. We may see the Hand of God in divers places, but nowhere so clearly as when we are among the hills. There God speaks.

One evening this summer, as twilight fell, and the light began to retreat across the lake, I drifted in a canoe among the hills which rose quickly from the water's edge. I had been reading about the wrecks of empire, shudderings of the earth; had heard raucous voices shouting across the air words of doom for helpless peoples, and in spite of my faith I was a bit downcast. But as I drifted I felt the silence of the spheres. Through the stillness there came the loveliest of all songs in the northern woods—the hermit thrush. As darkness falls, this lonely bird chooses to sing its sweetest song, as though to take the edge from the black night, and to say, "If night comes, can dawn be far behind?" There are no words to describe the song, as there is no language for the deepest realities of the heart; but somehow its beauty and its peace move into one's soul and we are changed a little. In those moments as I looked and listened, I saw the hand of God rising from the wooded hills.

Perhaps never in this generation has there been a time when we needed so much this strength that comes from quietness, silence,—*the strength of the hills.*

There is something about mountains that yields indescribable calm. Your pulse beats not so fast. The mystery of the centuries seems to lie amid the hills.

When you get close to them by climbing up into their craggy heights, the air is purer, the light clearer, and the vista wider. "I never met a moron on a mountain top," said a Dartmouth professor. Morons would never take the trouble to work their way into the peace of the hills.

There was a man in New England, some years ago, who saw the futility of impatience in the so-called civilization about him, and so he went away by himself to Walden Pond, near Concord, and there built a little house, "which was not large enough," he said, "to entertain an echo." Thoreau cultivated his own vegetables—only a few rods of earth are needed for one person, he discovered—and lived there for a few years; later he came back to the world of men for he knew that his real life lay with them. He says, "The mass of men lead lives of quiet desperation. Their incessant anxiety and strain is a well-nigh incurable form of disease. They have no time to be anything but machines. It is a fool's life. . . . Our life is frittered away by detail."

If we have an understanding with the hills and take of their patience, we shall see that hills outlast man; good outlasts evil; evil wrecks itself, is its own worst enemy. The centuries tell us that.

I have been reading Sandberg's life of Abraham Lincoln, and though I knew it before, I was again surprised to find how religious he was at heart. His favorite Psalm was 37. Often he read the words: "Fret not thyself because of evil doers; rest in the Lord; wait patiently for Him for He shall give thee thy heart's desire. . . . The eternal God is thy refuge and underneath and round about are His everlasting arms." Fret not thyself because of evil doers." Goodness knows how many evil doers were trying to pierce the armor of our great American with their poison darts. But Abraham Lincoln could wait; he had an understanding with the hills. The centuries had made him wise. He knew that no matter what the present moment brought, there were years ahead, and finally the right would triumph. No wiser words were ever uttered than those of Stanton as Lincoln lay dead: "Now he belongs to the ages."

The supreme lesson of life is to learn what the centuries say against the hours. What did the hours say when Ghengis Khan overran a large part of the known world? He tried to do what Hitler is attempting today. Is history fresh enough in your mind for you to remember that Ghengis Khan built a vast Mongolian empire which included Mongolia, Manchuria, Sinkiang, and parts of Siberia and Turkestan. He united these peoples or thought he had united them, and before he died in 1227, he had led his people in that great wave of bloodshed and conquest which overran Asia and struck terror into Europe, adding to his empire Northern China, the Caucasus and southern Russia. What have the centuries to say against those hours? The centuries have obliterated them, for only historians remember Ghengis Khan, the extent of his empire, and the futility of his bloodthirsty dreams.

What did the hours say of Napoleon? Surely he was a man of power, so

much so that when he was swash-buckling his way over nation after nation in Europe, the sound of cannon reached even to the United States. In that day news traveled slowly. When the news came, Congress went into a quick session; was all for passing a bill of universal conscription so great was the hysteria of fear. It reminds us of today. One man, however, who also belongs to the ages, arose and in words which still hold for our day as well as for his, spoke of the danger to a democracy of limiting the freedom of choice to men in peace time; spoke of the danger of tyranny arising when too much power is voted to the government—and the conscription was defeated. That man was the redoubtable Daniel Webster, who stood alone like a giant rock against overwhelming public sentiment and changed that sentiment.

What do the centuries say about the hour of strutting Napoleon? The centuries see him faded out into a selfish, ambitioned man who destroyed and never built. Long since his empire crumbled into dust. The supreme lesson of life is to learn what the centuries say against the hours.

Call the long roll of the ages if you will—not one tyrant stood for long. The fact is, Mankind has been pressing onward and upward toward freedom. Now and then the long, slow process has seemed to be stopped, but not for long. Man arises from the dust of defeat, takes up the trek once more, and weary but filled with an undying faith marches into the dawn. We have learned that no one man is clever or brutal enough to hold a world together in slavery.

"I have an understanding with the hills," says the poet. "They lend me hoarded memory." That is what we have been considering here—hoarded memory. And she continues, "I learn why a dream of forests must endure though every tree be slain." What does she mean by that?

Well, she means what many of us probably have seen time and time again. Man has come into the forest and perhaps ruthlessly cut the trees with little thought for future generations. Then all is quiet on the hillside. Years go by; one day you walk among the ruins of the once mighty forest, and there at your feet you find another forest springing. One pine seeds ten acres of land it is said. The dream of forest endures though every pine be slain.

The last battle is still to be fought; the last battle for righteousness among nations is still to be waged, and the last battle will go to Truth, and the God of truth.

We may learn this from the hills, if we are wise enough, learn why a dream of goodness must endure though every tree be slain. Why Jesus could die upon the cross, every dream seeming to be slain; disciples cowering in defeat; hopes shattered; ideals vanished; why Jesus could be hung upon the tree of ignominious failure, and yet have the dream of the forest endure. How is this, that Christ who was put down that day, dwells in the hearts of millions today, and so strong is our deepest yearning to be like him, that we come hither at times like this to worship at his feet, to look upon the cross again, and point our stumbling footsteps once more toward the ideal of life he lived and made forever glorious?

I am anxious in these days that those who have stood for the highest in peace in days past, stand now beside Christ whom we have vowed to follow. Don't argue with me or anyone else; argue if you will with Christ, settle

the matter with him; wrestle with him in prayer; and he will lead us in the way Christians must go if they are to remain Christian. I am anxious that the people of our churches for whom we feel particularly responsible, do not give way to hating, to vindictiveness, to thoughts of revenge, but rather surrender even more fully to the eternal, spiritual, irresistible principles of brotherhood, love, good-will. For these last endure.

The dream of brotherhood, the dream of good-will will endure though every tree be slain. Though we may need some police protection now, we must believe with Christ that the time will come when love will conquer the hearts of men; that the day will appear when we will be redeemed from the sins of selfish ambition, greed, national avarice, and blood-lust by the life and by the death of Christ. So may we climb to Calvary today and stand at the foot of the cross to hear again those words, "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do."

> "When the blue hills grow tender, when they pull
> The twilight close with gesture beautiful,
> And shadows are their garments, and the air
> Deepens, and the wild veery is at prayer,—
> Their arms are strong about me,—"

For they are the arms and the hand of God.

Way up in Franconia Notch in the White Mountains, New Hampshire, high on the side of a cliff there is a face—The Old Man of the Mountain. What is it that makes that face so fascinating, you wonder, as you gaze in awe and almost worshipful silence. What? It is the hush and quiet of the hills and the mountains round about. The calm of the forest. The unspoiled beauty of the wild valley. The serene face of the lake stretched like a mirror far below.

As we look upward at this majestic face, we know it is more than a miracle of nature; it is a symbol of God—the hand of God, placing man above the tumult, the restlessness, the fever of life, where he is intended to be. And as we meditate upon the simple grandeur of the face, there comes a yearning in our hearts to be like that strong face, lifted spiritually above the angry clamor and the raucous shouting of our life below. He belongs to the ages. He speaks to us from the hills of God: "Fret not thyself because of evil doers; rest in the Lord; wait patiently for Him, for He shall give thee thy heart's desire."

> "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills from whence cometh my strength."
> "For the Lord is a great God, and a great King above all gods."
> "In His hand are the deep places of the earth; the strength of the hills is His also."

And when we have an understanding with the hills, when the air deepens, and the wild veery is at prayer, we too shall feel their arms strong about us—the Hand of God.

PRAYER

Thy strength and quietness and calm are echoed in the hills and dales, rivers, seas, and forests about us. Even the birds of the air echo that which Thou hast tried to teach man through all these centuries,—that Thou dost hold in Thy hand that which is and was and is to be. Create in our hearts

The New Testament also presents fire as the sign of God's holy and redemptive purpose. Anticipating One, the latchet of whose shoes he felt himself unworthy to unloose, John the Baptist prophesied saying, "He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire." On the day of Pentecost, wherein re-born men became the living cells within the mystical Body of Christ, the Holy Spirit came upon them in "tongues as of fire." And Christian history bears unmistakable testimony to the same reality. Call the roll of the most creative spirits of Christendom—Paul, Augustine, Dante, Aquinas, Luther, Fox, Wesley, Pascal and many another—and you will meet enlightened and empowered men whose personalities were aflame with the fire of heaven.

The Evangel is a fire. It is kindled, it spreads, and it acts like fire; and Christ was and is the divine Prometheus. Through Him came, and through Him comes, the redeeming fire of God. What He taught and what He wrought were alike manifestations of the divine flame. "I am come to send fire on the earth." But why fire? What is the nature and function of fire? Here we have a clue to the mission of the Gospel.

Fire *destroys*. Destroys? Yes. But what it destroys is always evil. It destroys sin. It destroys pride. It destroys hate. It destroys the germs of moral tuberculosis. It destroys greed. It destroys needless poverty. It destroys ignorance. It destroys death. There is a sense in which the Gospel of God is militantly destructive. It destroys what is evil in order that it may construct what is good.

Fire *purifies*. Have you ever seen iron ore being flung into a blast furnace? The terrific heat causes the ore to melt, and as it melts a dirty scum rises to the surface and is ladled off by the puddlers. Beneath, and flowing out into ingots and moulds, is the pure stream, cleansed because it has had its impurities burned away. Not otherwise is it when the fire of God enters into the life of men. Man is indeed "the mysterious." He is a strange admixture of animal instincts and of angelic possibilities—the only being potentially a devil or a saint—and in essential nature and need he is always and everywhere the same. The tragic fact of his nature is his sinfulness and the tragic need of his life is redemption. Not psychological release but spiritual purgation is what man needs most. And this is precisely what the Gospel of God offers him. As with fire from heaven the Gospel, evoking penitence and confession, purifies and transfigures the whole of life. It removes the dross and leaves only the pure gold. Such is the thought of the words of St. Peter when he said, "Seeing ye have purified your souls in your obedience to the truth * * * * having been begotten again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, through the word of God."

Fire *gives warmth*. One of the apocryphal but, I think, authentic sayings of our Lord is this: "He that is near Me is near the fire." Jesus lights fires in cold rooms and in cold hearts. His coming is like the warmth of the summer-making sun. Men who have come under the spell and power of His Gospel are like men who have moved out of January into June. They are like frozen springs that have been released by the warm winds of spring. And, let us make no mistake about it, the source and secret of that warmth

is the Cross. Man, being what he was and is, it was only by our Lord's dying and rising again from the dead that the divine fire could be kindled. But now it has been kindled and it is for us who are His disciples to feed and protect and distribute the divine flame.

Fire *releases energy.* Without fire not a wheel would be turning in our factories, no great ocean liners would be sailing the seven seas, and our whole mechanical civilization would be at a standstill. It is fire that releases the energies of wood and coal, oil and gas. And it is the fire of the Gospel—this supernatural gift which the divine Prometheus, Child of Mary and Son of God, brought to earth—which releases the moral and spiritual energies of man.

By its ability to release those energies the "nobodies" of the infant Church became members of the "fourth race" and builders of a new civilization. By it Peter, the vacillating, became Peter the Rock and Saul, the destroyer, became Paul the builder, while the brilliant but passion-enslaved child of Monica, finding a new and higher passion in Christ, became the master mind of the Church and held that mastery for a thousand years. Augustine's spiritual and intellectual energy was released by the flame of a fire which, though burning forever, is never consumed.

Fire *illumines.* It lights up dark places. It drives menacing shadows away. It dispels ignorance, superstition and fear. Wherever the Gospel is known and believed there is light. Wherever the Word is preached and obeyed there is freedom. Why? Because the great, ultimate and inescapable questions of man's mind and heart are answered in the light of the fire from heaven. Another name for that fire is Revelation. What is man? Why is man? Who is God? What is God like? What is His purpose? What is life? What is death? What is beyond death? The only adequate answer is the answer of Him who is the Light of the World." I am come a light into the world," said Jesus, "that whosoever believeth on me may not abide in the darkness."

Fire *begets life.* Without light and warmth there is not only darkness, but death. Dante's rose of love and fire is the emblem of life which is at once ultimately significant and everlastingly enduring. The mission of our blessed Lord and His Gospel in the destruction of evil, the purification of character, and the illumination of mystery reaches the goal of the divine intention in the bestowal of a new kind of life. "I am come that they might have life and that they might have it more abundantly." Life—new, free, creative, abundant and everlasting—that is the nature and the purpose of the divine bestowal. Such life, hid with God in Christ, lifts man above the flux of time and chance. It gives him experience of eternity in the midst of his mortal years and, like his beloved Master, permits him to become a fire-builder, a life-changer and a music-maker in the earth.

Moreover, the Church of the living God is the only institution on earth which lives by and for that sacred flame which came down out of heaven. And because this is so, whatever else may happen to the institutions of men, the Church, as an undying flame, will not only survive but, ultimately, will overcome the world.

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

Peter Encourages Suffering Christians.

LESSON: I Peter 4:12-19; 5:6-11.

GOLDEN TEXT: "If a man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God in this name." I Peter 4:16.

DEVOTIONAL READING: Matthew 5:3-12.

INTER. & SR. TOPIC: Life's Testing Times.

Y. P. & ADULTS: Peter Encourages Suffering Christians.

The problem of suffering is one of universal concern. It is utterly illogical to suppose that the acceptance of a religious faith which has at its very heart a cross, should be considered any guarantee of escape from suffering. When one considers the suffering of Christ and remembers His words, "If they do these things in a green tree what shall be done in a dry?" one can quickly understand that the Christian is to expect pain and suffering and loss in this present evil world.

The message of Peter in the lesson today is that we should not be afraid of suffering nor turn in hatred from it when it comes as a result of righteous living. It is a re-statement of and emphasis upon the words of Jesus, "Blessed are ye when men shall persecute you and revile you and say all manner of evil against you falsely for My sake. Rejoice and be exceeding glad for great shall be your reward in Heaven."

The emphasis here is upon the words "For My sake." When we suffer with or for Him we become partakers of His suffering. Our suffering is vicarious. Frequently one hears a Christian refer to some loss or some bitter experience quite involuntary as "my cross." This is incorrect. These experiences so referred to are simply inevitable parts of life which come to all of us sooner or later in some degree great or small. They are a part of the discipline of life. They are inescapable. A cross is always voluntary.

TOPICS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE'S SOCIETIES

CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR: Y. P.—Christian Stand Against Drinking. Prov. 23:29-35. Isa. 5:11-12. Eph. 5:15-18.
Jr.—Why Study Music? Psa. 33:1-5.
LUTHER LEAGUE: Sr.—How Can a Christian Help a non-Christian. Acts 8:26-38.
Y. P.—Why Should We be Interested in Church Work? Acts 2:41-47.
Inter.—Our Bodies. I Cor. 6:19-20.
WALTHER LEAGUE: August Topic—Crime Problems. Characteristics of the Criminal. Cures and Preventives of Crime.

FOR THE BULLETIN BOARD

The door of our lips is too often left ajar.
Be careful what you write on the heart of a child.
You can play with neither happiness nor mud without getting some on yourself.
When the way is not clear keep to the right.
For safe driving you have the choice between brakes and accelerator.
Laws are never broken. You can break yourself but not a law.
No nation can know liberty without knowing God.

CALL TO WORSHIP: "Open Thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy law."
PSALM: 97.
PRELUDE: Swing Song—*Pease.*
ANTHEM: Forever Satisfied—*Wooler.*
OFFERTORY: Madrigale—*Simonetti.*
POSTLUDE: Festival March—*Hurst.*
OFFERTORY SENTENCE: "For every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills. I know all the birds of the mountains; and the wild beasts of the field are mine. If I were hungry, I would not tell thee; For the world is mine, and the fullness thereof."
OFFERTORY PRAYER: Accept our gifts and direct us in their use, our Heavenly Father, so we may carry forward Thy work in accordance with Thy plans for Thy children here. Amen.
BENEDICTION: The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

SERMON

Eleventh Sunday After Trinity.
THEME: ***Singing at Midnight.***
HARRY W. STAVER, D. D.

TEXT: "About midnight Paul and Silas were . . . singing hymns unto God." Acts 16:25.
HYMNS: "Come, let us join our cheerful songs. . . ."—*Warwick, C. M.*
"O for a thousand tongues to sing. . . ."—*Azmon, C. M.*

Dr. Charles R. Brown, in his recent book called "Being Made Over," says, "How often we find the people of God singing. When those Israelites stood on the farther shore of the Red Sea, faced toward the land of promise, they were singing. It was a brave, glad song: 'The Lord hath triumphed gloriously.' When those early Hebrews brought up the Ark of the Covenant out of its narrow tent into the temple Solomon had built, they were singing: 'Lift up your heads, O ye gates, lift them up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of Glory shall come in.' When John saw that multitude which no man could number, standing before the Great White Throne, they were singing. 'They sang the song of Moses and the Lamb'—the song of moral order and of redemptive love."

The significant fact in each of these instances, and others like them, is that the song follows the situation. By that we mean that the singing is an outburst of gratitude and joy that comes after the victory is won. To give vent to jubilation in the hour of victory is a normal and expected reaction. It would be strange and abnormal if it were not so. But how about singing at midnight, in a situation that is not conducive of song?

One of the Psalmists pictures such a situation and the reaction to it. He relates that a company of Jews, captives in Babylon, were asked to sing "some of the songs of Zion." And what was their answer? It was "How can we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?" That sort of reaction is not an uncommon experience. Within the last decade we have had abundant opportunity to observe it in the lives of men and women. Some of us may not need to look beyond our own hearts. Difficult times descended upon us. We called it, first, a depression and then, a recession. What we label

it does not matter. People lost their money, many lost their jobs, the hopes and dreams and labors of years collapsed like straw huts before a strong wind. We know what happened. People became morose, morale broke down. In a word, the situation was one to put the song to silence. And men have been saying, "How can we sing in such a world as ours? How can we be courageous when our confidence is gone? How can we keep on trusting when there is nothing left to trust?" People do feel like that. They think like that. And they talk like that in every time of overwhelming trouble and dark disaster.

But if we have situations that prompt men to sing and situations that put the song to silence, we have situations, also, in which we look for no song and yet find one. That is the situation related in the chapter from which our text is taken. Paul and Silas had been thrown into prison and to make the prison doubly secure the jailer "made their feet fast in the stocks." In that situation we read that "about midnight Paul and Silas were singing hymns unto God." What sort of business is this, that men beaten and scourged and shackled and bound in chains should find it in themselves to sing? In that company of condemned men there were only these two who had "a spirit in their side that hell could not control." And so there rose out of the darkness of the dungeon a song in the night.

A psychologist would be much interested in a case like that. He would be interested to know whence this ability to sing in the midst of shadows and suffering was derived. He would be concerned to learn the source of that "stream the waters whereof make glad the heart of man." And we are interested, too, to know this same thing, not merely for the sake of knowing but that we may, also, have a song for songless days. Where shall we begin our inquiry into such a matter? There is no better place than to begin with the men who sang at midnight in that old prison at Philippi. And when we put the questions to Paul, what does he answer? He answers with one word and that one word a dynamic name: Christ. Paul has no other answer than that.

The skeptic comes, the behaviourist comes, the psychologist comes and they say, "Paul, don't you think your background has a good deal to do with this affair? Don't you think that you were born with good blood, of superior stock and with exceptional endowments? Don't you imagine that your education, your social training, must be taken into account in any explanation of your ability to face difficulty in such a spirit of triumph?" And Paul answers, "Brethren, I am a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, and instructed in the strict manner of the law of our fathers. I am a Pharisee, a son of Pharisees. I am a Roman born. If any man glories in the flesh, I glory more. But in none of these things is the reason for my confidence in crisis nor the basis of my hope in every hardship, nor the explanation for my song. There is only one explanation, one reason for it all—"I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me."

Were Paul to speak to troubled men and women who have no spirit to sing in our world today, what would he say? If men and women, trying to escape from the perplexity and sense of futility, should seek some word from the

great Apostle, what might they expect to hear from him? They would hear the same secret he knew so well himself and gave to men, in words already written, these hundreds of years. He would say to men, "Let Christ dwell in your hearts by faith. Be strengthened, with the might of his spirit, in the inner man. Be rooted and grounded in the love of God and the practice of good will. In nothing be anxious, but in everything, by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God and the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, will garrison your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus."

Do we really want a song in the night? Do we sincerely seek that spirit within which no dungeon can drown? Then Paul has pointed out the way and the Way is Christ.

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, Thou only canst endow us with the joy and serenity that bursts forth in song, even on the eve of adversity as the world knows us. Give us grateful hearts for all Thy gifts, those of joy and abundance and fellowship, and those of trials and adversity. Let us not question Thy wisdom in allotting the gifts, but let us be ready to sing forth the praise of the Lord at all times.

We bow our heads in contrition and sorrowful acknowledgement of the numerous falls from Grace which have beset our days and our ways, and we yearn for a closer fellowship with Thee, in a new forgiveness for that which is past, and a renewed grace for that which lies before us.

Help us to sing forth our joy and gratitude for that which has come into our lives through Thy Son, Jesus Christ. Amen.

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

The Writer of Hebrews Explains the New Covenant.

LESSONS: Hebrews 8:1-10:18. Print Hebrews 9:11-22.

GOLDEN TEXT: "Having been made perfect, he became unto all them that obey him the author of eternal salvation." Heb. 5:9.

DEVOTIONAL READING: Hebrews 9:23-28.

INTER. & SR. TOPIC: A Letter About Jesus Christ.

Y. P. & ADULTS: The Better Covenant.

Christianity claims to be the perfect and the final form of religious belief. This letter to the Hebrews outlines the base upon which that claim rests, and points the consequent obligation resting upon its adherents, to appreciate its full significance and to share its riches with the followers of other faiths. The letter to the Hebrews is therefore one of the most important documents in the literature of the earth.

This Epistle to the Hebrews is different in form from all of the other epistles of the New Testament. It begins as an essay, continues as a sermon, and ends as a letter. It is of a high literary order. It presents a definite theme and develops that theme with great skill. Its arguments are well

knit, logically arranged, and carefully presented. In no other single portion of the New Testament is a treatment of one subject so long sustained. It was addressed to a particular local group or circle of Christian believers. The Jewish religious ordinances of worship were imperfect and bore upon their surface the marks of their imperfection. They were prophetic of a better economy under which this fellowship with God would be complete and vital. This is the thesis which the writer defends in the verses which form our lesson today. The author stoutly maintains that the blood of bulls and of goats can never take away sin. Jesus Christ, the great Sacrifice, offered not the blood of some animal but the blood of His own body, giving His own life, and by virtue of His atoning blood, He entered into the Holy Place, into the very presence of God, there to obtain eternal redemption for His people.

Jesus Christ through His atonement on the cross has secured for us salvation and deliverance from guilt and the pollution of sin and has made immediate and intimate our fellowship with God the Father. The contrast between the old and the new, between the atonement of the law and the atonement of Christ is amplified and explained in the remaining paragraphs of the chapter.

There is special significance in the words of Moses which the author quotes, "This is the blood of the covenant." These words were used by our Lord in the instituting of the Supper which ever after was to be a memorial of His atoning death. "And He took a cup and gave thanks, and gave to them saying, Drink ye all of it for this is My blood of the covenant which is poured out for many unto remission of sins."

TOPICS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE'S SOCIETIES

CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR: Y. P.—Christian Stand Against Gambling. Ex. 20:15. Amos 8:4-10.
Jr.—Good Sport and Games. Prov. 3:5-6.
LUTHER LEAGUE: Sr.—When They don't Understand at Home. Eph. 6:1-4.
Y. P.—Finding God in Nature. Psalm 19.
Inter.—The Rainbow and the Covenants. Gen. 9:8-17.
WALTHER LEAGUE: August Topic—Crime Problems. Questions for Discussion. Capital Punishment. Execution of Bible Characters. John the Baptist. Achan. Jesus. Stephen. Benhaddad. The Parole System. Reclaiming the erring. On which days are most crimes committed? by Whom?

FOR THE BULLETIN BOARD

When we forget we cease to feel.
Are we worth the price paid for us?
You must choose between a world of chaos or a world of God.
When you stop you are left nothing but to start again.
Our little systems have their day only. God has His eternity.
The times, not God, are out of joint.
Fog retards all driving.

CALL TO WORSHIP: "I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord: I will pay my vows unto the Lord, yea, in the presence of all His people, in the courts of the Lord's house, in the midst of thee, O Jerusalem. Praise ye the Lord."
PSALM: 96.
PRELUDE: Evening Prayer—*Reinecke.*
ANTHEM: O Taste And See—*Sullivan.*
OFFERTORY: Pastorale—*Wachs.*
POSTLUDE: Duke Street—*Kinder.*
OFFERTORY SENTENCE: "Whoso is wise will give heed to these things; and they will consider the loving kindness of Jehovah." Psa. 107:43.
OFFERTORY PRAYER: Let Thy beauty be upon us, O Lord, transforming our lives from what we are to that which we ought to be, uniting us in a new love, a new grade of service, and a new happiness of obedient action. Thou art near, and we are blind to Thy presence, because our faith is little. Open our hearts, our minds and our spirits to a full response, so we may carry Thy message abroad in the land.
BENEDICTION: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

SERMON

Twelfth Sunday After Trinity.

THEME: *Three Ways to Know God.*

CHARLES HADDON NABERS, D. D.

TEXT: Psalm 19:1-14.
HYMNS: "Summer suns are glowing. . . ."—*Ruth,* 6s, 5s.
"Father, to Thee we look. . . ."—*Father To Thee,* 11s, 10s.

"Is there a God? If there is a God, can a man know Him? If a man can know God, how?" These three questions are more far-reaching and fundamental than any other questions that the tongue of man has yet been able to ask. Upon their answer depends the necessity of asking many of the other questions so frequently heard and so foolishly discussed.

If you cannot answer these three questions, there is no use in framing others. If you cannot answer these questions with an immediate and unqualified "Yes" it is a waste of time to bother about a philosophy of life, or about anything else.

The Scriptures constantly disclose to man the assurance that he can know God, and that such knowledge is a divine gift unto man. "God in sundry times and in divers places . . . spake unto the fathers by the prophets, hath . . . spoken to us."

There is a God. Man can know God. Now, how does this knowledge come. In Psalm 19 the Hebrew Psalmist indicates three great avenues along which a man may walk in order to attain to this temple of knowledge. The first is the revelation of Nature, one of God's great books.

From the Yosemite Valley, John Muir, who loved the world and found God in all His works, wrote: "I was baptized three times this morning: first, in balmy sunshine that penetrated to my very soul, warming all the faculties of the spirit, as well as the joints and marrow of the body; second, in the mysterious rays of beauty that emanate from plant corollas; and third, in the spray of the lower Yosemite falls. My first baptism was by immersion, the second by pouring, and the third by sprinkling. Consequently all Christians are my brethren, and all will allow that I've got religion." Muir felt

that God was through and above the glorious works His hands had made.

God can be known in nature, the works of His fingers, but the revelation there is only partial. It is a revelation of glory and of might. When such a revelation came to Habakkuk, he was afraid, until God spoke a further message. "God's dignity is forecast in the ascending pinnacles of Everest, His might prophesied by mad waters lashed by a Caribbean storm. His genius focused in one tulip pushing upward to the sun, but God is above and beyond these creatures of His will, and He is never confined unto them.

It is good that we are not limited to this area for a revelation of God, for certain aspects of nature are too terrible to be associated with a loving God. Nature is earthquake and flood and fire as well as fruitful showers and warm spring sunshine. Nature sometimes unveils, but at other times hides the face of God.

The second avenue along which man may travel to come to know God is the avenue of God's Words, the revelation He makes of Himself by the apostles and prophets by whom He gave a partial and ever-enlarging revelation of Himself, and finally through Jesus Christ His Son. Says this psalm:

"The law of the Lord is perfect, restoring the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The precepts of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart. The commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes. The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever. The ordinances of the Lord are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and the droppings of the honeycomb. Moreover, by them is thy servant warned; and in keeping them there is great reward!"

The faith of the Christian church is that the Book we call the Holy Bible is the Word of God, inspired in such a way as no other book can claim inspiration, and being for us a lamp unto our feet in the darkness, and a light for our path along an untried road. Its main purpose is to let us know what we are to believe concerning God, and to designate with no danger of being misunderstood the things which God requires of us. Its precepts light for us all the gloomy corners of right conduct. It furnishes red and green lights along the avenue to save us from accident and death as we make our journey across the years. It gives protection from dangers that lurk beside the path, and sings sweet songs to us as we travel.

It makes plain things to be done, and things to be left undone. For the keeping of the word of God, there is great reward; for the danger of stepping aside in evil detours there is abundance of warning. It warns by the experience of men like unto us who failed to obey the law of God. It warns by the catalogues of dangers and disasters sure to reach aliens and strangers to the word of God. It warns through the gracious invitations of love from the lips of Spirit-guided leaders, and from Christ Himself. The Bible—the Little Book that John saw by vision on Patmos, is a book to be taken, to be eaten, to be assimilated, and to be exampled in life. Upon the keeping of the Law of God depends the harmony of man and His Maker, upon the following of the precepts of the divine word depends unity between man and His Redeemer. Upon it depends salvation for the soul, light upon the duties of life, and a clear insight into the character and purpose of God. We know God as we come to know His word; we know Him as we become the agents for the doing of His Word.

The third avenue along which we may walk in our search for a knowledge of God is prayer. The psalmist turns from the outer world, and even from the Word of God as brought us by the testimony of others to a direct approach to the throne of God, born out of his dire need for a personal knowledge of his personal life. He prays:

"Who can discern his errors? Clear thou me from secret faults. Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me; then shall I be upright, and I shall be clear from great transgression. Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength and my redeemer."

Prayer is one of the few common qualities in all religions. It is the cardinal act of worship. In the processes of prayer men find themselves bound across sea and desert and city and separation. No one seems far away when we pray for them. Shanghai is just across the street, and Buenos Aires is just around the corner. In prayer there is no East nor West, no North or South, no far, or near—to God's love we trust ourselves, our friends, our work, and our loveliest, sweetest dreams. In Him all we have and do and are are bound together. Thus we come to know God, as we fling ourselves upon Him in utter abandon of self and sin.

An old Roman, Juvenal, struck a Christian note when he said: "Allow God Himself to decide what is best for us and most suitable to our circumstance. For instead of our imaginary bliss, God will bring us real good. In prayer man is nearer to God than to himself."

Out of the practice of prayer comes harmony of life. We come to God not on our feet but on our knees. Through prayer both ancient and modern men have found a direct pathway to God. In prayer we place our burden upon the Lord. We lift up our dreams and ambitions for purification.

Does God do anything in prayer? The answer to that question is that sensible people over large areas of the earth through century after century do not continue to fool themselves by a sham and a delusion. What does God do in prayer? He makes a response. He does not always say, "Yes," any more than you always say "Yes," to your child. The highest form of prayer came from the lips of Jesus when He cried: "Not my will but thine be done." But prayers are always answered. He gives us not our wishes, but our needs. And we always need to know God, and this petition is ever answered by a fuller understanding of the ways of the Lord in the life of the world, and in our personal experiences.

Let us pray: "Our Father, Who art in heaven . . ."

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

John Urges Christian Love.

LESSON: The Epistles of John. Print I John 3:13-18; 4:7-21.

GOLDEN TEXT: Let us not love in word, neither with the tongue; but in deed and truth. I John 3:18.

DEVOTIONAL READING: Hebrews 13:1-8.

INTER. & SR. TOPIC: John writes about Christian Love.

Y. P. & ADULTS: The Test of a Christian.

John is endeavoring to instruct the Christian believers in the fullest enjoy-

ment and exercise of the Christian life. He is insisting that the assurance that one has eternal life is not mysterious but is based simply upon grounds simple and plain, namely, faith and righteousness and love. Simply because hatred is so natural and so universal love is all the more certain proof of the presence of a new life principle, the expression of a new birth, the evidence of high spiritual attainment. Explain just what Christian love is. When Jesus said "Love your enemies" there were many who were quick to say, "It is utterly impossible. The commandment is absurd." In the love of which Jesus is speaking there is nothing sentimental. Christian love is cherishing an undiscourageable good will toward all men and being willing to express that good will at all times and under all circumstances at the cost of the keenest self-sacrifice. In this sense it is possible to love one's enemies and only in this sense. Love is the greatest force in the world and is the only force that can overcome evil and hatred.

In preparation for the lesson let the teacher look up the following references about John.

1. He was full of energy. Mark 3:17.
2. He was intolerant. Mark 9:38.
3. He was vindictive. Luke 9:54.
4. He was ambitious. Mark 10:35-37.
5. He learned love, however, in the school of Christ. See John 13:23, John 2:9, John 3:14-18, 4:7-11.
6. He was entrusted with the care of Christ's mother. See John 19:26.
7. He refers to Christian love twenty-five times or more in his epistles.
8. He and Peter healed the lame man and are brought before the Sanhedrin. Acts 3, 4.
9. He and Peter go to Samaria to review Philip's work. Acts 8:15.
10. He was banished during the persecution under Domitian.
11. When old he was carried into the Church to preach and said, "Little children, love one another."
12. He emphasizes the wrath of God against sin. See John 3:18, 19, 36. Chapter 5:29.

The Gospel of John is devoted almost entirely to Jesus' ministry in Judea. One third of it deals with the last twenty-four hours of His life.

TOPICS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE'S SOCIETIES

CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR: Y. P.—Campfire Service of Worship. Psa. 27:1-6.
Jr.—Helpful Hobbies. Psalm 18:20-33.
LUTHER LEAGUE: Sr.—Laborers with God. I Cor. 3:6-9.
Y. P.—Same.
Inter.—Missions in America. Acts 8:1-8.
WALTHER LEAGUE: August Topic—Crime. Service Project—Visit Penal Institution in your community. Cooperate with chaplain, provide tracts, devotional booklets. Offer to join in a religious service.

SEPTEMBER, FIRST SUNDAY

CALL TO WORSHIP: "Beloved, I pray that in all things thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth."
PSALM: 93.
PRELUDE: Idyl—*Lack.*
ANTHEM: O Come Before His Presence—*Martin.*
OFFERTORY: Pastorale—*Calkin.*
POSTLUDE: Jubilate Amen—*Kinder.*
OFFERTORY SENTENCE: "Beloved, imitate not that which is evil, but that which is good. He that doeth good is of God.
OFFERTORY PRAYER: We ask in Jesus' name that our gifts be acceptable to Thee, and that love may abound in our hearts toward Thee and Thy children. Teach us Thy conception of stewardship, and cause us to accept that which Thou teachest through Thy ministers.
BENEDICTION: The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with you all.

SERMONS

THEME: ***A Workable Faith in an Age of Trouble.***

JOHN BENJAMIN MAGEE, PRESIDENT CORNELL COLLEGE.

TEXT: "When Jesus heard this he was astonished and turned. . . ." Luke 7:9.
HYMNS: "O for a Faith that will not shrink. . . ."—*Ortonville, C. M.*
"Faith of our Fathers, living still. . . ."—*St. Catherine, L. M.* 6.

This story is one of the most delicately wrought and beautifully told narratives in the whole gospel. It is woven of the finest texture. It takes the reader into the sickroom by a side door, where one may peek in, but actually not enter. To stand by the bedside of a loved one trembling upon the brink of the world is to be about as close to heaven as we ever get in this life.

I am impressed with the fact that the rich soldier was not trying to save something which might enrich him personally, but to save a life which had already meant everything to him. There is poetry and music and the perfume of fragrant flowers in this simple story of unselfish grief.

A Soldier

This is likewise the story of a soldier, an officer, a centurion, a man in charge of one hundred other men. He is one of several mentioned in the New Testament story. This man was a pagan. He was a Roman, and an enemy to the little country in which he lived. But he must have been a man of high character to do what he did, and to win the respect even of his Jewish enemies. We forget that just because a man is a soldier does not keep him from the qualities which make for the highest character. George Washington was a soldier, but his trust in Divine Providence and his faithfulness to the little church in which he was an official, serve as splendid example to all other patriots. Robert E. Lee, than whom there was never a finer Christian in uniform or out of it, stands to both north and south as the very embodiment of every quality that should be in the genuine Christian gentleman.

This gracious centurion was considerate of his servant. Some officers treat their orderlies with contempt. If this man were an orderly, this servant who

was dying, then he had become accustomed to consideration by his superior. He was religious. Pagan though he was he was apparently in search of truth. He had gone far enough to worship with the Jews, had won their respect and confidence and most of all had, with his own personal funds, built their synagogue. The Jews, usually so bitter toward the Roman invader, became his emissaries when he sent to Jesus for help. It must have been while worshiping with these people in their little synagogue that he heard about Jesus, the new prophet, who was teaching a new doctrine and doing much healing. Thus he sent to him. He suffered from vicarious sorrow. This was his third distinguishing mark. He suffered because his servant suffered. His grief was unselfish. His anguish that of one who truly felt the approaching loss of a dying friend who just happened to be his servant. Most of us have never learned the poignant pain of vicarious tribulation. And furthermore, this centurion was an humble man. He felt unworthy to go into the presence of the Master, and accordingly sent others to represent him. This is no Uriah Heap humility. It is of such a rare brand that it stands by itself as of the most perfect quality. The passage where the Centurion says "Lord trouble not thyself, for I am not worthy that thou shouldst enter under my roof; wherefore neither thought I myself worthy to come to thee: but say a word—" I think for beauty of utterance should be placed alongside Ruth's "Entreat me not to leave thee nor to return from following after thee—." This soldier has indeed set the highest example of humble faith anywhere described in the gospel story. The Master so said himself. And thus faith is the fifth great characteristic of the man's life. His faith is so simple and so unalloyed that it astonishes even the Lord himself. "I have not seen such faith, no not in Israel." And this faith to me becomes the next object of interest.

The Law of Unselfish Expectation

This man's faith displays the law of unselfish expectation. These two words may appear to be paradoxical, but they are not. To expect is not necessarily to be selfish. There is selfish expectation and there is unselfish expectation. Selfish expectation is described in "Little Women," where the girls are talking about Christmas, and think it is not fair that they shall not exchange gifts simply because there are poor people who won't have any. They have planned that they were to have certain things and they feel they should get them. This is selfish expectation. But to desire something for someone else even to the point of humiliation, is unselfish expectation.

Dr. Brightman in his "Moral Laws" speaks of the law of the best possible. Here one should strive for the best possible and expect the best possible, and the best shall come to him. This law to which I refer is like the latter law, only that it is still higher. It reminds one of "The Magnificent Obsession," where the nub of the story was that to do good to someone with no knowledge on their part that the good had been done them, and with no desire on the part of one's self that he shall receive a reward, is to release unlimited power within the giver. Here, by obeying this law of "unselfish expectation" one may have anything within reason. But it must be desired unselfishly. I

recall the story of a friend and his wife. Her life was being despaired of. They had asked me to pray for her recovery. I declared that if we would pray for recovery, but with an absolute willingness that the answer might be "no" as well as "yes," that in that moment of surrender we might release the power necessary to do what we asked. But it must be no external surrender without the heart's approval. The husband thus prayed, and came at last to the painful point where he cried, "Thy will, not mine be done." The doctors all declared that the returning health of the wife was beyond their ability to explain. It was not beyond ours.

This law once learned and practiced makes the Centurion's act no miracle at all. No miracle because it has caught hold of a mighty law, as practicable as gravitation. It is no miracle when things operate by law. The astonishing thing to Jesus was not the healing of the servant, but the faith of the centurion. There is the miracle.

Why not have what you want in this age of crisis and trouble? It can be done provided you want the unselfish thing. To approach any desire with the humility of the Centurion, and with the faith which believed in the power of the Master to heal even at long range by a word, is to hold in your hand or in your heart the power of one of the greatest secrets in the world. Do you carry an heartache for some loved one? Is your desire for yourself or for him? Try this law of unselfish expectation based upon a faith which believes implicitly in the result, and you have it. To him who knows how to practice this law daily, it is not unreasonable to believe that he even prospers with material things. But he must not desire these for himself.

Let us go back to the centurion. He gave a synagogue, he sought the health of a suffering servant, he made others happy, he asked nothing for himself, he was genuinely humble. Love, humility, sacrifice, kindness, these all lead to multiplied return. They can't help it.

How does this apply to a world at war? When the servant is not sick there is no way to test faith. When there is no crisis or trouble there is nothing to draw out the best that is in us. The way we respond to affliction is the proof of our faith. Even our present world chaos is not too big to cast at the feet of the Lord of all Life and unselfishly to expect that your faith shall be answered. Enough Centurions trying this instead of weapons of war and our world shall be saved.

How does it work with employment, for those who have sought a job? Have you sought one? Have you unselfishly sought one? Have you considered the good it will do someone else regardless of the cost to yourself? Yes, even a job can be had. Desire for honest employment is not amiss in our view of faith. God is not altogether outside of you. He is within you as well. "Truth is within ourselves. It takes no rise from outward things, whate'er you may believe." So said Browning. Let the God within you reach out after the God outside of you, and in this union there shall be power. There is nothing you cannot have according to this view of faith, provided it comes within the range of unselfish expectation. Did it happen with the suffering servant? Sure! When the Jews returned, they found the man had been made well from the very hour they had met Jesus. Oh yes, I forgot to say, and it must not be forgotten, don't leave Him out of it.

A Sure Cure for our Suffering World

There is a sure cure for our suffering, troubled world. It is to be had by the same method the Centurion used. The soldier method being used today will not bring it. This soldier had the right idea. Bring Jesus into it. Put up to Him a real proposition based upon your own absolute trust in Him. If he fails you—? Well, he won't. He never has.

Do you remember that story told by Van Paassen in his "Days of our Years" where he describes the old priest going down into the trenches. "Please my children let me pass," he cries to the soldiers. He set his foot on the firing step and started to mount the ladder that stood against the parapet. He flung off his overcoat. He marched out into the mud. His cassock caught on the barbed wire. Drops of blood fell on his white cassock. He staggered as his feet sank in the mud. But he held high the cross of the Redeemer. Men climbed up out of the trenches into no-man's land. "The war is over" they cried. Men were kneeling. Germans, Frenchmen, officers, soldiers. He intoned a *Pater noster*. He clutched his throat. They caught him as he fell. They carried him back as the machine guns rattled again. A shell exploded where he had stood a moment before, and buried a shoe which had dropped from his foot, under a shower of brown mud.

As long as the Christ is given a chance, trouble vanishes and warring elements are quieted into peace. But alas—alas—!

The thing which astonished Jesus was that a soldier had such faith. Can it ever happen again? Let us hope it may.

Thirteenth Sunday After Trinity.

THEME: *Four-Fifths Dead.*

(A Sermon for Young People).

ALFRED GRANT WALTON, D. D.

SCRIPTURE: Luke 10:25-38.

TEXT: "And Jesus answering said, A certain man went down from Jerusalem. . . ." Luke 10:30.

HYMNS: "Jesus, the very thought of Thee. . . ."—*St. Agnes, C. M.*
"God of my life, Whose gracious power. . . ."—*Cannons, L. M.*

The story of the Good Samaritan holds second rank among the parables of Jesus, being exceeded in popularity only by the parable of the Prodigal Son. In the narrative of the Good Samaritan the unfortunate victim was found lying half dead by the roadside. Ordinarily we think of a person as being dead or alive and the use of the expression *half dead* attracts our attention. It indicates clearly that the stricken traveler was weak and helpless and only partially in possession of his normal faculties. There are many people in this world who have never been beset by highwaymen who are in a similar state.

When does a human being start to live? We answer, "The day he is born." When does a human being start to die? Again we say, "The day he is born." The processes of life and death are going on continually. They are partially under our control and partially beyond it. A person with a physical infirmity is shut off from a part of life. The poor man in the parable was

half dead through no fault of his own. So it is with others. Take the hard of hearing, who miss ordinary conversation and who are compelled to dwell much in the solitude of silence. Something of real life is taken from them. There are over 63,000 blind people in the United States. They are a patient and gentle company, but they live only partially. They know nothing of the azure sky, the golden sunset, the tints of purple mountains or the emerald sheen of spring. They have our compassion and our deepest pity.

Sometimes a person who lives a full life physically loses a part of real life through the fortuitous circumstances which surround him. There are workers on farms and in industry who have to struggle so hard merely to get enough food for themselves and their families that they do not get a chance to do more than to toil and to sleep. There are devoted mothers whose time is completely taken up with their sacrificial duties in the home.

But I want to direct your attention to the person who is sound in body and in mind, who has some time to himself and yet who, quite unconsciously or even deliberately, may be only partially alive, who lives wholly outside of great sections of life and is as ignorant of them as though they did not exist. Such a person may be four-fifths dead. The fraction may be inexact; it is merely suggestive.

Our world today is teeming with interest and activity. So great and far reaching are some of the changes going on that some feel that we are seeing the end of one era and the beginning of another. Take a look at our own country and observe what is taking place. We are engaged in a program of social reconstruction. Efforts are being made to help the farmer. Other schemes are being worked out to establish a proper balance between production and consumption. Still other campaigns are being waged against unemployment with the attendant evils of poverty, hunger and despair.

While government officials are handling these domestic issues, others are working in quite different fields. Every day brings its thrilling story of achievements by physicians combating the ravages of disease. Scientists are making remarkable technological advances whereby life is becoming easier for men. We are making machines to replace physical toil. We are seeking to combat crime, which is one of our major social problems in this country today. Recent statements by students in this field indicate that the United States is wasting more life and money on crime than any nation in the civilized world. One of our popular magazines has pointed out that our national crime bill is $13,000,000,000, three times the appropriations for the recent relief bill, and four times the cost of all education, public, private and collegiate in the United States. One might also speak of world situations with all their kaleidoscopic change.

The citizen must keep himself alive to his world, he must study, must listen, must discuss the great issues confronting him. Yet there are some people more interested in the latest cinema sensation than in any world events. Their reading interests do not go much farther than the comic strips of the newspapers and their musical satisfactions are found in the saxophone. Now I like the movies and I have nothing against the comic strips. I can't say quite so much for the saxophone, which someone has defined as an ill wind which nobody blows good. But regardless of these things, no one

should allow himself to be four-fifths dead to our interesting world of swiftly moving human events and ever changing history.

But let us move into another field. About five years ago the British government spent $500,000 for a few pages of parchment, yellow with age, every one of which is known to scholars the world over. They bought the famous *Codex Sinaiticus,* one of the most valuable and oldest manuscripts of the Bible. This fabulous sum is symbolic of the value of books, all books of every description. It was a great day when Gutenberg invented the printing press and Mergenthaler the linotype machine. These inventions have lifted people out of darkness into the light of knowledge and of truth. Books are invaluable. Think what they contain! The greatest thoughts of the greatest minds of all generations! Philosophy, education, culture, scientific knowledge, romance, amusement, all may be found in them. They have made every poor man rich and every humble home a royal court. A person may live in menial surroundings, face the most dire hardships, and be limited in untold ways, as was Abraham Lincoln, but if he is acquainted with books he may walk in sacred groves with Socrates, breathe the exotic life of the Orient, enter the gay court of kings and study in the laboratory of the world's greatest scientists.

Yet there are many people who never even visit a public library. Only one third of the average city population uses such facilities. Some time ago a young man called to see me. He was trying to secure work. I chanced to ask him what he was reading in his spare time. Although he had plenty of opportunity to do so, he hadn't read a book for six months, and he said that he saved newspapers for about a week and then read them all at one time. Put down, then, among the four-fifths dead, the person who deliberately shuts out of his life the world of books.

This same idea might be emphasized in the field of esthetics. Think of the beauty of this world absolutely untouched by war and the depression, and yet often passed by in our hectic feverish lives. Wordsworth sounded a true note when he said:

> "The world is too much with us, late and soon,
> Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers;
> Little we see in nature that is ours,
> Great God, I'd rather be a pagan suckled in a creed outworn,
> So might I, standing by this pleasant lee,
> Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn,
> Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea,
> Or hear old Triton blow his wreathed horn."

It is a great thing that the rising generation is coming to a finer understanding of the joy of life that is to be found in the great out-of-doors. With books, with the world of nature, with music and with art, why should anyone choose to be four-fifths dead?

Then let us consider moral and spiritual ideals. Jesus emphasized a great truth in a striking paradox. He said, "Whosoever would have his life must lose it and he who would be greatest must be the servant of all." He had no praise for those who passed on the other side but He commended the Samaritan who helped a neighbor in distress. That noble spirit has grown, that

divine spark has spread its radiant light to the uttermost parts of the earth. Many are finding life in service to their fellowmen. Down in Africa Albert Schweitzer, one of the noblest men of our age, is doing a magnificent work. He is a renowned organist, a world authority on the music of Bach, a gifted preacher, a great theologian. But he is also a famous doctor and he has invested his life with the natives of Africa to help them conquer disease and know better how to live.

In India, a little man weighing 90 pounds, Mahatma Gandhi, holds the spiritual destinies of millions of people in his hands. In his purpose to serve, he has renounced all the comfort and luxury of the world. Time would fail to tell of the great scientists like Sir Arthur Eddington and Robert Milliken, the great preachers like Stanley Jones and Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick, and an unnumbered company of great physicians, who have found full life through useful service to other men. Contrast these leaders with our public enemies. Compare them with the social parasites or with the young man who chooses a life of indolent ease and wants his father to pay the bill.

Two mighty forces are at work in this world. One is the force of selfishness. It is damaging, destructive, devilish. It can turn life into hell and make the world no larger than one's outstretched arms. The other is uplifting, progressive, divine, changing men into the likeness of God. Jesus stands as the eternal expression of that larger, fuller, more abundant life. Woe to the individual who does not have something of the spirit of Christ pulsating in his breast. Truly we may say that he who is a living, breathing, thing and yet who is indifferent to human need or is lacking in human idealism is four-fifths dead. He has not yet discovered what it really means to live.

I envy the young men and women of today. Old age is passing from the scene; physical vigor is gone. The present generation has made a sorry mess of things. But to the rising generation is given the glorious privilege of making a new world and of guiding the path of history. Young people of America, strong, clean cut, clear eyed, you are our joy and our hope. You live in a world of material things, of trees, and flowers, of mountains and hills, of sunsets and stars. You live in a world of happiness and freedom from care. This is as it should be, but remember that you will live infinitely more if you find your way into the great moving streams of activity and progress.

You will live infinitely more if you enter the realm of books with their noble thoughts, their subtle beauty, their eternal truth. You will live infinitely more if your life is given to the achievement of moral and spiritual ideals. Don't be four-fifths dead. Lay hold of life, rich, teeming, abundant. So shall you discover its fullness and find your own inherent divinity.

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, Lord and Creator of all things great and small, look upon us in love and compassion in this hour of fellowship with Thee. We are creatures of Thy hands, yet we fail to evaluate our gifts in their proper light.

Give us grateful hearts for the comforts of life, for the joy of training, for the love of parents, family, friends, and fellow-workers. Help us to understand the gift of Thy love upon the Cross, so that we may understand the

great love that will permit the forgiveness of the sins we so wantonly repeat from week to week, in the face of our resolve to look up to Thee in our trials and temptations.

Give us grace to return to Thee in the hours of joy as in the hours of sorrow. We ask in the Name of Thy Son, Jesus Christ. Amen.

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

Revelation: A Message to Persecuted Churches.

LESSON: Rev. 1—3. Print Revelation 2:1-11.

GOLDEN TEXT: Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee the crown of life. Revelation 2:10.

DEVOTIONAL READING: Psalm 34:15-22.

INTER. & SR. TOPIC: Enduring Persecution for Christ's Sake.

Y. P. & ADULTS: Christian Churches in a Time of Persecution.

The time of this lesson was toward the close of the life of the Apostle John, perhaps about 96 A.D., and the place was the Isle of Patmos.

All of John's writings were composed at the very close of the first century of our era. The book of Revelation is usually dated 95 or 98 A.D. This is perhaps the most ignored book in the Bible. The book is the only prophetic book in the New Testament, a sort of a telescope through which we look far into the future; and again, the book actually promises a particular blessing to those who read and hear and keep its teachings. (See Revelation 1:3.) The great note of the book is the assurance of ultimate victory for Jesus Christ in the conquest of light over darkness. The book is unique. Its literary structure is intricate. The poetic imagery implied is splendid. Its inspired visions are majestic. Its cryptic symbols are mysterious and its presentation of eternal truth is dramatic. There is remarkable agreement as to its substance and aims. One of its main purposes is the consolation and cheer of the persecuted churches. Difference may arise as to the meaning of its details and the interpretation of some of its riddles, but none who study it will deny that it is a message intended to encourage the suffering and tempted followers of Christ by assuring them of ultimate victory, and to strengthen them in their faith. Judgments and doom roll and thunder through its pages. No attempt is made to hide the dark side of the picture. Sin is very real and tragically close, pressing in upon the heart of each and sin must be punished for God is just. There is no sentimental confusion of right and wrong, nor is there any weak tolerance of evil. While there is the River of the Water of Life there is also a Lake of Fire. The punishment of the evil is sure. The reward of the righteous is certain. In the Gospel John gave us the picture of Christ, in the Epistles the picture of his own soul, in the Revelation the picture of Heaven. The book was born out of the stress and the trial of the first century with all of its persecutions and troubles. The book deals with the great conflict of Heaven, Earth, and Hell. Those who say that the book is an elaborate puzzle are wrong. Those who say that there is no mystery about it at all are equally wrong.

There can be no doubt that a cipher understood by the Christians to whom the book was addressed ran through the Apocalypse, a style of literature much in vogue at the time. It was a time of secret organizations and mystic messages and various forms of what might be called practical free masonry. The peril of the church naturally promoted passwords and codes and many allusions which are dark to present readers were no doubt clear to the recipients of the message. It would not be correct to say that the book of Revelation is simply a comforting tract for the times. It was that indeed, but more than that it was a revelation for and of future ages. The book must be studied and taught in reverence and in great patience. The same Holy Spirit who inspired it will, however, interpret it to the patient and prayerful student.

EVENING SERMON

THEME: ***A Rebuke to Pessimism.***

TALMAGE C. JOHNSON.

TEXT: I Kings 20:18.
HYMNS: "God calling yet! Shall I not hear?"—*Woodworth, L. M.*
"O Master, let me walk with Thee. . . ."—*Maryton, L. M.*

Reaction always follows high emotion. It was so after the World War when we turned from our lofty idealism back to "normalcy." It will be so after the present European War. It was so in 1929 when we were plunged headlong from boundless optimism to the depths of despair by the economic depression that engulfed us. It was so with Elijah, one of Israel's major prophets.

Great had been Elijah's triumph over the prophets of Baal at Mt. Carmel. But it had been gained by resorting to force and to the spectacular. The means did not justify the end, for the end attained thereby became for him a hollow victory. Pessimism overwhelmed him. He fled into the wilderness for his life. Sick with reaction, he seated himself beneath a juniper tree and prayed for death. In his despair, divine help was given. But it was not in the dismaying storm, earthquake or fire, but through a still small voice that God spoke to him. And to God he poured out this tale of woe: "I have been very jealous for the Lord God of hosts; because the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thy altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life to take it away."

How thoroughly human was this ancient prophet! He felt as many of us feel in this modern day. "Only I am left; and they seek my life to take it away." Everybody's wrong but me.

Indeed there's no end of pessimism in the world today. The psychology of failure has laid hold on us. Many of us are quite certain that evil is about to win or has already won in most of the world. In our individual lives, we expect defeat, and consequently we experience defeat. Even the church has been accepting a defeatist attitude. Many churchmen have spent so much time diagnosing our ailments and bemoaning our ills, that we have lost our

own certainty of the reality of the Risen Lord and His continued presence in the affairs of men. And so we wait, like the prophet of old, for God to come back to us through great and spectacular manifestation of power, through storm, earthquake, or fire, or military triumph. And we are deaf to the still small voice through which he still speaks.

This prevailing pessimism is widespread. It expresses itself very positively about our economic system. We begin to believe that the great depression will never end, that business cycles are inevitable, that the problem of wealth distribution cannot be solved. Out of such an attitude can come no courage to venture upon new economic policies. Faced with the collapse of a selfish capitalistic system, the pessimists will never help to right its wrongs or work out a new economic system based on co-operation rather than competition.

The modern pessimism is also prevalent in our thinking about international relationships. It avers that totalitarianism cannot be resisted, that international goodwill is forever blotted out, and that the only hope for America is a heavily armed isolation. Such an attitude will never deliver us from paralyzing fear, will make no contribution to the re-establishment of world peace, and will sooner or later make us an easy mark for a more aggressive and optimistic peoples.

But when our modern pessimism looks at the status of morality and religion in our times it positively drips with gloom. Surely, it declares, the world is going to the bow-wows. Look at modern youth, sex-crazed and pleasure-mad. Look at dwindling church attendance and the drying up of church resources. Consider the growing indifference of men everywhere to the claims of organized religion. Behold advancing paganism! But pessimism offers no remedy for the evils it paints with such black paint against a black background. It counsels despair, not effort.

Now God had a plan for the world of Elijah's time. He rebuked the prophet's pessimism and sent him off on a program of activity. "All is not lost," he declared. "Yet I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees of which have not bowed to Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him." Thus rebuked, chastened, but strengthened, Elijah went forth to battle again for Jehovah with full expectation of victory.

God still has a plan for the world. A few years ago Dr. Henry P. Van Dusen in a splendid book called *God in These Times*, said: "The ultimate outcome of history is within God's control." How we need to realize that today as we are almost overwhelmed by what seem to be triumphs of evil. But Christians have no reason for falling into pessimism as they survey the whole sweep of world history since the launching of the Christian movement. What if progress is not in a straight upward line? Surely mankind has ever spiraled upward and will continue so to do. Of course, there are things wrong in our world. But we shall not right them by sitting under a juniper tree of pessimism in a wilderness of despair.

Never has the church had a greater opportunity. Let it cease to diagnose its own ailments, let it stop trying to save itself, let it forget its present and its future in a program of unselfish and courageous ministry to human need. It isn't the forms, the creeds, the man-made rules of civilization, we want to save, is it? It is the fundamental principles that underlie the universe

with which we are primarily concerned, is it not? They have a way of taking care of themselves ultimately.

Indeed reaction follows high emotion. There comes a reaction to the sort of pessimism we have been experiencing. There is evidence that already it is setting in. People are beginning to realize their need of God again, to return to religion. The time has come for religion to make a great advance.

MID-WEEK SERMON

THEME: ***Stand Up and Be Counted.***

TEXT: Acts 2:14.

Nicodemus came to Jesus by night. It is not hard to imagine the hand of Jesus on his shoulder, the quiet smile on his lips, and the simple words from his lips, "But he that doeth the truth cometh to the light!" Nicodemus later came to the light in the Sanhedrim and at Calvary.

Stand Up and Be Counted: Eleven grouped themselves around Peter. Before he sat down three thousand were standing with them. If Peter had stood up alone the Christian Church would have had a lame beginning. Suppose no one had stood up at all. Humanly speaking, no one man can carry all the burden, or push the enterprise to success single-handed. "Take my yoke upon you": comfort? A yoke is for pulling; pull your share. What is your real attitude toward Christ?

Think of What You Lose: You seek rest and peace. You avoid controversy. You detest being conspicuous. But go against the convictions of your soul and you will never know rest and peace. Lesson of Nicodemus. Found peace only when in the sight of the whole city he went out to Calvary and ministered in the last rites to the broken body of Jesus. That is your solution. Peace is found in God only, and in doing the will of God.

Think of What Others Lose: Were you ever in a meeting, with some question up, and nobody speaking? Then one man got up quietly and said, "I'm for it!" And whatever it was was ensured there and then. Perhaps others are just waiting for you to speak. Here was one standing up, among eleven. Then there were about one hundred twenty. Then three thousand. Think of the leaders in the Church. They need you standing with them. Think of Christ. You need not be a fanatic, but you can be a "fan." You contribute your bit. It may be only a word of kindness, of courage, the reaching out of a helping hand. But do it as a Christian.

TOPICS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE'S SOCIETIES

CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR: Y. P.—Work and Its Blessings. I Cor. 3:11-14. Eph. 4:28.
Jr.—Christ Calls to Confession. Rom. 10:8-10.
LUTHER LEAGUE: Sr.—Knowing Our Church. Eph. 3:8-12.
Y. P.—Christ in Art. Poetry. Isa. 53.
Inter.—Work and Workers. I Cor. 3:6-9.
WALTHER LEAGUE: September Topic. Habits (Health). Motive. Importance and Preciousness of Health.

SEPTEMBER, SECOND SUNDAY

CALL TO WORSHIP: "Light shall shine out of darkness, who shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."

PSALM: 33.

PRELUDE: Ballade in C—*Foulkes.*

ANTHEM: Praise the Lord—*Simper.*

OFFERTORY: Andantino—*Botting.*

POSTLUDE: Postlude in B Flat—*Camp.*

OFFERTORY SENTENCE: "For I through the law died unto the law, that I might live unto God. I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I that live, but Christ liveth in me."

OFFERTORY PRAYER: Thou Who are the giver of every good and perfect gift, Thou to Whom we owe all we have and all we are, as we lay this offering upon Thine altar it is with the consciousness that we do but return to Thee a portion of that which has been given to us. We offer this portion in the name of Him Who gave Himself for us. Amen.

BENEDICTION: Now unto Him that is able to guard you from stumbling, and to set you before the presence of His Glory without blemish in exceeding joy, to the only God our Saviour, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion and power, before all time, and now for evermore. Amen.

SERMONS

THEME: What Does it Mean to Live?

ALFRED GRANT WALTON, D. D.

TEXT: "Man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord." Deut. 8:3.

HYMNS: "The King of Love my Shepherd is. . . ."—*Cecilia,* 8s, 7s.
"Lord, for tomorrow and its needs. . . ."—*Vincent,* 8, 4, 8, 4, *D.*

That all men are created equal is only a half truth. The person born with a physical handicap cannot possibly be the equal of one who is fortunate enough to be well and strong. Goethe said: "We are not all equal, nor can we be so." In another way the statement that men are equal is true. We are all equal before the natural law. The sun shines on the just and the unjust. We are all equal in the amount of time at our command. We are equal in the human rights which belong to us. We are equal in the sight of God. Finally we are equal in the presence of death which is the common leveler of all. In a sense we are unequal; in a sense we are all alike.

There is something that belongs to our equality which is a common possession. It is this sacred and mysterious thing that we call life. Everyone has the sunlight and the fresh air, the fields and streams, the moon and the stars, the capacity to remember, the power to choose right and wrong, the opportunity to dream, to hope, to aspire. All are the possessors of a day on earth, of a share in the throb of the universe. Living is something quite different from mere existence. Some people are on earth only a few brief hours and yet crowd into their span of life more than others who reach the proverbial three score years and ten. But there are others quite different. They eat, sleep, have a few petty interests, and that is all.

The person who wants really to live must have some appreciation of beauty. Beauty is all about us, yet there are some who never see it. One person walks through the woods and is stirred by the soft rustling of the leaves; he sees the flowers and the ferns, he hears the song of a bird in a distant tree, and

is aware that he is in the company of living and growing things. Filling his world is the regnant power of beauty, the majesty of all creation, the grandeur of the handiwork of God. For another, such a walk is merely a quick way to get to the other side of the copse. But beauty is not confined to the natural world alone. It is found in painting and sculpture, in architecture and music, in poetry and prose, in the operation of law, and in the rhythm and harmony of the universe. Beauty is more than delight to the eye, more than pleasure to the ear, more than a haunting memory. It is a part of the cosmic whole. It is a part of eternal truth; it is a part of the life of God.

We must have some worthy purpose in life. What fun is there in a game if there is no possibility of victory? Of what value would be a sea voyage without a destination? What enjoyment is there in a mountain climb without the lure of the higher ground? Anyone would be in hell who never achieves his heart's desire, who never has a dream realized, a goal attained, or a summit won.

What a life a man lives who has a real purpose to guide him and who tastes the fruits of victory! Think of the zeal with which Louis Pasteur pursued his studies, and the gratification which he had when he found out that diseases which he studied did not come from spontaneous generation, but from microbes. Madam Curie and her distinguished husband worked for years with tons of pitch blende in order to isolate radium. They have helped to save thousands of lives. These people knew what it meant to live. They had a real purpose in life. It was their constant inspiration.

Simon Stylites built himself a pillar and made his permanent abode on top of it. He was looked upon as a holy man. He may have been holy but he was not very useful and his world was not bigger than a brick pile. Think how petty, insignificant and trivial life is bound to become if you think only of your own personal interests, your own personal pleasures and desires? It is like living in a dark cellar. The minute you begin to think in terms of others, that moment you begin to know some of the real joy of living. I heard of an appeal that was being made in the Philippines for bread for the people of China. Shortly after the request was made a bread wagon drove up to campaign headquarters with a huge quantity of bread. Investigation disclosed that a simple Chinese boy, hearing that his countrymen needed bread, had taken the appeal literally, and with seven dollars which he had saved for a bicycle he had ordered the bread to be sent in. Bread meant real bread for him. What was to be done with it? The committee pondered for a while, and then made a decision. They took the bread to another meeting, explained the circumstances under which it was given to those who were there and sold off the bread at auction for hundreds of dollars. Incidentally, a wealthy man, an American, heard about the boy's sacrifice. He stuck his hand in his pocket and pulled out a twenty dollar bill and said: "Here! This ought to be enough to buy that boy a bicycle." And it did! That is the marvelous thing about unselfishness. We not only get more out of life ourselves, but we bring more of life to others.

If you really want to live, you must reach out to comprehend the eternal mystery of creation and of life. You must recognize human values. You must discover God. Did you ever try to work out a jig-saw puzzle? If you

have, you know that when you look at the box of little pieces they look like a jumbled unrelated mass. It is only when the pieces are placed properly together that the full beauty of the design is made known. So it is with life. If we see it in parts, it is almost unintelligible. We see joy and suffering, pleasure and pain, victory and defeat. What does it all mean? Little or nothing! But when a person knows God, when he sees men as the chief handiwork of God's creation and of priceless worth to Him, when he sees the struggle of humanity in education, in science, and in industry as a part of an eternal purpose of divine origin, then he begins to comprehend the whole. Then he realizes that the individual is no mere cog in a vast machine. He is not simply a conglomeration of cells in a bio-chemical universe. He is not simply a means; he is an end in himself. He is a part of the life of God.

You are not living simply because your heart is beating. You are not living simply because you enjoy a sirloin steak or because you can saunter off on a morning for a walk. Any dog can do that. A lion in the jungle can do that. Man is more than an animal that stands on his hind feet. He is a being of infinite capacities and powers. He is the possessor of an intelligence and a conscience. He is, as Emerson has said: "A piece of the universe made alive." We only begin to live when we begin to exercise our powers, when we are awake to our universe and our own potentialities in it. What does it mean to live?

This it means to live—
To feel the pulse of earth, to be alive
To beauty everywhere—in surging spring,
In summer clouds, in autumn's coral sunsets.
To find delight in common things,
Dew on the grass, moss on the rock,
A robin's morning song.

And then, to be content—with work to do,
A dream to realize, a hope to build upon.
To face the dawn with eager heart,
And, using well each treasured hour,
To find at night a quiet rest
With sweet untroubled memories.

Above all else, to be aware of Truth,
To sense the cosmic mystery,
And searching, find the way
That leads to God!

This is life indeed!

Fourteenth Sunday After Trinity.

THEME: *Dissensions Among Christian Leaders.*

CHARLES HADDON NABERS, D. D.

TEXT: "And when the ten heard it, they were moved with indignation against the two brethren." Matt. 20:24.
HYMNS: "O Master, let me walk with Thee. . . ."—*Maryton, L. M.*
"O For a closer walk with God. . . ."—*Balerma, C. M.*

Here is a little sentence picked from the final portion of the life of Christ as portrayed by Matthew, which seems totally out of place.

It is an account of bitterness between man and man, the bitterness you might expect in a political meeting, but not among Christian leaders.

Its origin is a sub-rosa, disingenious effort of two men to push ahead of ten other men, by ways that are not open and by tricks that are not entirely above criticism. It is the sort of conduct that might be allowed in the lowest brackets of commercial life, when leaders have not learned that service ranks above self, and only the man who serves best profits most.

One is amazed to discover such dissension among leaders in the kingdom of Christ on earth. One would cover the situation with a thick veil by saying that this is merely the raw material with which Jesus works and as soon as these men have lingered long in the presence of the Master they will be delivered from the power of dissension and strife. Surely this occurs when a group have just come into fellowship with Christ, and before a long period of fellowship has worn off the ragged edges of their uncouth personalities. Not so! It occurs at the very end of the three year ministry, and the final journey to Jerusalem for the passover at which Jesus is to be slain has begun. Then too, one is wont to apologize by saying that such dissensions occur not in the inner circle of the disciples, but on the outer fringe, among the hangers-on, such as are found on the borders of any movement, men who want to be numbered among the disciples, but have not come close enough to warrant real discipleship. Not so! In this incident appear only the inner circle, and the ten plus two make up the twelve disciples, the ones longest in the company of the Christ, the ones who know Him most intimately.

Of these, at the very end of the public ministry comes this bit of undesirable biography: "When the ten heard of it, they were moved with indignation against the two brethren."

Stand aside from the quarrel in a Jerusalem room nearly two thousand years ago, and look at the eternal elements of life which the lens of this statement brings into clear focus. In the workshop of God are no duplicates. Even the five tiny ladies of Collander, Ontario, differ in beauty, weight and dispositions as well as in many other details. But human family contours, tones and aptitudes live on from year to year. We recognize the similar in external matters. One does not need to believe in the transmigration of souls to recognize an individual here like one we knew there, one today like one we knew yesterday.

Such truth brings the dissension among the leadership of Christ's men in the Upper Room in Jerusalem an hour before the institution of the Holy Communion, as Luke gives it in his Gospel, a matter of vital concern for men today. Strife is still abroad in the world. Dissension still exists among God's leaders on earth. At the time when Christians should be laboring to bring peace to all men, they are tearing each other apart in bitter enmity. When, a little bit later in the evening, Jesus prayed that the world might come to know that He was one with the Father, He asked that this be demonstrated by the unity of believers. Strife between one Christian and another Christian, between one congregation and another congregation, between one denomination and another denomination, is the thing which Jesus Himself feared most that night as a deterrant to the coming of His kingdom on earth.

Why the strife then and now? Selfishness and self-seeking, even when

that selfishness and self-seeking is in the realm of advancement in God's kingdom, it is still selfishness and still self-seeking, and therefore contrary to the teaching, spirit and example of Jesus.

We must needs return to the conference Jesus held with the disciples under the very shadow of the cross about the true principles of greatness in the kingdom of heaven. Jesus said: "Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you; but whoso will be great among you, let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant; even as the son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."

Such statements form the final word to end dissension between all men who bear the name of Christian and who are desirous of being numbered among the people of God in the world. The world may place the diamond crown upon the head of a ruthless dictator who blasts his way to the palace through oceans of blood, rivers of tears, and the thunders of falling cities and blasted towns. But the crown of life comes upon the head of the man who forgets himself in his service for others, who holds his own life worthless, if need be, so that he can point the lost man to salvation in Christ. It will be upon men and women of the church whose names have never been heralded far in newspaper headlines or in radio boosts at whom the Lord will look with approving eyes and say, "These are my jewels!"

Such men and women are more faithful to the unselfish precepts of Jesus than to anything else in life. Christ's prizes are never secured by the man who can push the hardest and the longest to get to the head of the line. To the amazement of those standing in the front of the line, the prizes are distributed in the rear.

I suppose the world will finally reverse its false judgments, and come to reckon greatness by the yardstick of Christ. The ideals of the Master to drop down more and more into the common consciousness of men, and men and nations do seek to defeat their actions by describing it as unselfish moves, however warped some of these descriptions seem. It means that in the sky of human thought hangs the standards of God, and through the light which Christ throws upon them through the example of all men who have taken them seriously, the nations know they must measure actions in accord with them.

Despite the temporary ebb of idealism, despite the apparent success of ruthless warfare in several areas, we are making progress, and in the world's calmer moments, we are becoming disillusioned about the success that can be won through the victory of brute force, and more and more disturbed when we see prominent places usurped by men whose spirit is alien to that of the Galilean Teacher. The leaven is working, and may it early leaven the entire lump of world thought!

The program of Jesus is permanent and true. It is permanent because it is true. Dissension takes a man far from the presence of the Lord, and makes it impossible for the work of Christ to be done through his hands. In that far away land of sacred story where the foot of Jesus rested often upon rocky soil, there is a daily greeting which every citizen has for every

other citizen. It is "Salamat aleikum!" Peace be unto you! How often it comes in the New Testament! How often it needs to enter our lives. To every man and woman with strife and bitterness within the heart, to every class arrayed against another class, to every soldier upon the frontier holding rifle ready to shoot before another shall shoot from the other trench, to every seeker after prominence in the kingdom of earth, and in the kingdom of heaven: "Salamat aleikum!" Peace be unto you! And our authority for such a greeting is this: "Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."

PRAYER

O Thou Eternal God, with whom one day is as a thousand years and a thousand years as one day, keep us from harbouring low and spiteful and unworthy thoughts toward one another, because we are unable in our frailty to understand the things of eternity. Thou art great and high and lofty, inhabiting Eternity, and yet Thou dost stoop to brood over the creatures whom Thou hast made. In our better moments, we know ourselves to be the creatures of Thy hand, and the burden of Thy heart, yet we stray from that certainty into the lower levels of thinking and quarreling—trouble over that which is only in Thy sphere. Visit Thou us constantly, filling our hearts with love and assurance that we are worthy of the redemption which Thou hast so richly poured out upon us, through Thy Son, Jesus Christ.

Strengthen us in Thy might, so that we may do and dare great things for Thee, humbly returning to Thee in acknowledgment and love. We ask in Jesus' Name. Amen.

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

The Eternal God, the Source of Help.

LESSON: Revelation 7:9-17.

GOLDEN TEXT: "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God, the Almighty, who was and who is and who is to come." Rev. 4:8.

DEVOTIONAL READING: Isaiah 41:8-14.

INTER. & SR. TOPIC: A Vision of God Our Helper.

Y. P. & ADULTS: The Eternal God, the Source of Help.

This lesson carries the vision to Heaven where the saints who had been persecuted and slain on earth are dwelling in the heavenly places with the angels of God and with God and His Christ as Ruler and King. Emphasize the fact that the vision was born in the heart of an exile. John had been driven from all that was dear to him, separated from life by the sea. This may perhaps be the chief meaning of the expression "and there was no more sea." To John the sea meant separation from those he loved and Heaven is a place where we shall be with God and Christ and with our loved ones. The mansions of which Jesus spoke are mansions of reunion. John had lost his country but he had not lost his faith. A marvelously clear discernment came to him in the day of loneliness and exile. Verse 9 indicates that there

SEPTEMBER, THIRD SUNDAY

CALL TO WORSHIP: "God be merciful unto us and bless us and cause His face to shine upon us." Psa. 66.
PSALM: 29.
PRELUDE: Elevation in A Flat—*Mehul.*
ANTHEM: The Lord Is My Shepherd—*Smart.*
OFFERTORY: Largo—*Dvorak.*
POSTLUDE: Grand Chorus—*Dubois.*
OFFERTORY SENTENCE: "I have longed for Thy salvation, O Jehovah; and Thy law is my delight."
OFFERTORY PRAYER: Heavenly Father, give us grace to enumerate Thy gifts to us and in our gratitude share Thy gifts to Thy Glory and the salvation of Thy children on earth. Give us grateful hearts for all Thy mercies during the months which have gone, and renew our strength according to the needs of today. Sanctify us with Thy love, and bless us in Thy service. Amen.
BENEDICTION: Peace be to you, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

SERMONS

THEME: *The Church We Reject and the Church We Love.*

ALVIN E. MAGARY, D. D.

TEXT: Gal. 4:22-31.
HYMNS: "Far down the ages now. . . ."—*Narenza, S. M.*
"Jesus with Thy Church abide."—*Litany*, 777, 8.

This passage in Paul's Letter to the Galatians is usually passed over as being applicable only to the ancient traditions of the Jews.

The purport of it is this:

"It is written that Abraham had two sons, the one by a slave woman, the other by a free woman. He who was the son of the bond-woman was born of the flesh; he of the free woman was by promise."

"These things are an allegory. The Jerusalem that now is, is the Jerusalem of bondage. But the Jerusalem that is above is free, which is the mother of us all.

"So then, brethren, we are not children of the bond-woman but of the free."

If you substitute "church" for "Jerusalem" you will have a profound comment on the Christian church of today.

If one were to stop the first hundred people he met and ask them what were their feelings toward the church, he would, if they answered frankly, receive a mixture of replies.

To some the church means nothing. Some of these people would denounce the church. Some would sneer and remind you that its people do not practice what they profess and that its ministers are a poor lot. Some would express painful doubt. And some would tell you that the church is as dear to them as home and family and life itself. These are men and women who deny themselves for it, devote time and strength to its service and who, on occasion, would lay down their lives in its behalf. Why are men so widely divergent in their attitude toward the Church?

It is because they contemplate the church in different aspects. They see it as an institution or they see it as an inspiration.

As an institution it has been guilty of most of the charges that have been

made against it. Its history has often been deplorable and it has been guilty of a thousand sins of omission and commission.

As an inspiration it has been the source and spring of hope and virtue, of courage and of truth, it has been truly the salt of the earth and the light of the world.

If the church has no claim except as an institution among the other institutions of society, men are right in rejecting it. In fact, it is rejected in the New Testament. In the Book of Revelation, written in the terrible reign of the Emperor Domitian at the end of the first century, the writer says of one church, "Thou hast the name of being alive, but thou art dead," and of another, "I will spew thee out of my mouth." That is the church that is the child of bondage, that has pandered too often to the greed and ambition of the world. Its history does not make pleasant reading for the Christian.

When, early in the sixteenth century, the Earl of Arran marched on Edinburgh with his Hamiltons because of a quarrel as to who should marry the widow of James IV, Bishop Gavin Douglas went to intercede with the archbishop to prevent civil war.

The archbishop received him robed in his rochet, the garment of the humble man of God. As the argument proceeded and the archbishop grew vehement, he shouted, "As I am a man of conscience."

Gavin Douglas tapped him on the breast and there was a sound of clinking metal. "Methinks, my lord," said Gavin, "your conscience somewhat rattles."

For under his rochet the archbishop was clothed from head to foot in armor.

The armor under the rochet—that may be a parable of the church's history. And we do not love the bride of Christ arrayed in steel.

Too often has the church connived with rascals, too often lighted the fires on which saintly men and women burned. Too often it has aided in the oppression of those whom it was established to heal and set free, too often instigated hate among men instead of love, and betrayed its Master even while it praised him and kissed him on the cheek.

That is the institutional church of whose worldly power Christians sometimes are foolish enough to boast, the church whose rulers have ruled kings, an institution that has been richer and more powerful than any government on earth, whose word could exalt to wealth and worldly glory, or humble to the dust, whatever man it would.

That is not the church we love.

There is another church, child of the promise of man's redemption, "the church that is from above and free, the mother of us all."

Let us admit at once that this church, too, is not without fault. Its people are average people with all the failings of human kind, and as individuals they are often terribly vulnerable.

Hypocrisy? O yes, they are often guilty of it. They do not always live on Monday as they pray and sing on Sunday and sometimes they have been known to profess allegiance to Christ in church and deny him in the marketplace.

But here is the point. It is in and by the church that they are lifted up.

In the fellowship of worship they attain to noble resolutions and deep insights which are beyond their ordinary reach. They can no more maintain the feeling of such hours than the friends of Christ could maintain the exaltation of the Mount of Transfiguration. But only a shallow person will deny that, in this aspect, the church has been unique in the inspiration of the noblest ideals that men have striven to fulfill.

It is true that Peter cried out, with his heart full of the spirit engendered in that last supper, "Though all men should deny thee, I will lay down my life for thee. Even if I must die with thee, yet will I not deny thee." And that the other disciples also pledged themselves likewise. It is also true that before many hours had passed Peter had denied him thrice with oaths and the other disciples had fled and left him to bear his cross alone. But those men were better and the world was better for that hour of spiritual exaltation and heroic resolve, even though it is always true that when the spirit is willing the flesh is weak.

It has often been remarked that the morals of society are never as good as the morals of an ordinarily good man. The Italian statesman Cavour deplored the fact that when a man entered into the service of the state he must be willing to sacrifice the ideals of honor by which he guided his private life.

The world holds people down, the church lifts them up. Let them yield to its spirit and they will be raised to heights of thought, of purpose and of vision, which they never otherwise attain. I know, of course, that some who habitually attend the church get little good from it, for they enter its doors in a mildly complaining attitude, denying, criticizing, disagreeing and resisting all that the fellowship of worship is designed to do. Yet as a whole, whether it be in the little crossroads church in the country or the great cathedral in the city, it is in the fellowship of Christian faith that men and women know the noblest hours of their lives, and it is through that fellowship that they participate in the noblest enterprises of the world.

This is the inspirational church. Its young men and women are moved to give their lives to humanitarian service. It is, for multitudes of people, a channel whereby they express the compassion of Christ in ministries of comfort and healing in all parts of the world. From it have come tens of thousands of lives devoted to truth and goodness, with no thought of reward save the consciousness of having tried to follow in the way of Christ.

Yes, in one aspect the church is a human institution that must plead guilty to most of the charges that have been brought against it. We can hardly blame those who have no means of judging it save as one among the many fallible institutions of the world if they regard it without entire respect. But there is another church that we love and support and serve. It is dependent on no creed nor ceremony, no favor of the rulers of this world, nor on anything the world can give or take away. It is the true church of the living Christ, founded on the faith of those who believe, and love, and follow him, built of their lives, the church against which all the storms of the centuries have beaten in vain.

If there has been always a Judas to betray, there has been always a John to love. If there was an Alexander Borgia on the papal throne in the fifteenth century, there was a Savonarola in Florence powered with the living spirit

of God. If there was a Tauler filling his coffers and the coffers of his master with bribery and corruption in the name of God, there was a Luther standing in the presence of the wealth and power of the world, contending for the purity of Christian faith.

Through all the centuries since Calvary, even in the darkest times of history, the inspiration of the church that flamed in the Day of Pentecost has never been extinguished.

The value and power of the church lies in a sphere other than that of organizations and institutions. The conflict in the church's history is precisely the conflict in each man's life. It is the war of the body against the spirit. Our feeling for the church is like our feeling for a friend whose blunders and inconsistencies we must forgive because we love him, and whom we love because his essential nature inspires and enriches us. As the church has been committed to the care of men, it has been often weakly human. As it has been possessed of the unquenchable spirit of Christ it has been gloriously divine.

And so we come back to Paul and his allegory. There is a church that is a thing of bondage, a church that we deplore and repudiate even as John, writing his Apocalypse, deplored and repudiated the church at Laodicea. But there is a church that is above, that is free, and the mother of us all. It was of this church, symbol of the redemptive power of God, that John wrote, "I saw no temple therein, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men and he will dwell with them and be their God."

Fifteenth Sunday After Trinity.

THEME: ***The Triple Need of the Church.***

TALMAGE C. JOHNSON.

TEXT: "Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus." Acts 4:13.

HYMNS: "The Church's one Foundation. . . ."—*Aurelia,* 7s, 6s, *D.*
"Glorious things of Thee are spoken. . . ."—*Austria,* 8s, 7s, 81.

The church of today is not as weak as its enemies claim. It is not as powerless as some of its own people are willing to concede. Those who discount its influence and its effectiveness in the moral and social order of our times are mistaken. No organization or institution is doing as much as is the church to keep alive in this war-torn world the principles of peace, stability, and unity. Those who are timid and fearful for its future deserve rebuke in the words of the Master, "O ye of little faith."

Nevertheless it is true that the modern church is failing to achieve or to do what is needed for humanity. It is by no means measuring up to the fulness of its potentiality. Perhaps it is even doing less than formerly. At any rate its critics are right in many of the things they say about it. They will have rendered it a great service if they succeed in bringing to it a realization of its present triple need.

The first great need of the modern church is boldness for God. The voice of the church in these recent years has been so soothing that it has well-nigh

put its members to sleep. It's attitude has been that of compromise. It has been afraid of controversy. In the presence of modern science, it has developed a serious inferiority complex. In a world suffering with real ills the church has become the victim of hypochondria. It has lost the boldness of its early days.

The very boldness of the early Christians accounted for the progress of the Christian movement. It challenged first the contempt, and then the admiration, and finally the acceptance of the Roman world. This early church had no apologetic attitude, no squeamishness. No half-hearted advocacy, no compromising with paganism could have won for it a victory over the anti-Christian civilization of the first centuries. Boldly it stood for God!

Error may be advanced in either of two ways. It may go forward with boldness that runs roughshod over opposition or it may slip forward with timidity that escapes attention. But truth advances only with boldness. When it becomes fearful, its forward movement is immediately halted. This principle is well established in every department of history. Copernicus gained no hearing for his scientific theories except by boldness. Christopher Columbus gained no converts to his geographical truths until he boldly demonstrated them.

The modern church, if it is to preserve and advance its truth, must like all of those who found truth that the world had not yet accepted, boldly proclaim its findings. Individual Christians must have the courage of their convictions and cease their compromising with a sinful social, economic, and political order.

The second great need of the modern church is for a Christ-like compassion for the lost and the distressed of the world. Here was the very genesis of the Christian religion. Jesus came with compassion in his heart for the oppressed, the distressed, the burdened, the underprivileged, the sick, and the lost. The successful and the privileged of his day had no time for him. His first followers were from the ranks of the distressed. Witnessing what he meant to these, a few of the more fortunate who themselves felt compassion for human suffering began to follow after him. But without a sincere passion for human happiness, Jesus himself could have gained no following.

And it was this that enabled the early Christian church to gain a foothold in the world, to advance its cause, and finally to triumph over the religions that offered no surcease to sorrow, no release for captives, no salvation for the lost. The first converts to Christianity came from the ranks of those who saw in it their only hope, their only comfort, and their only salvation.

Whenever and wherever Christianity has ministered faithfully to human need, both physical and spiritual, it has flourished. But whenever and wherever Christianity has identified itself with the ruling class, become the defender of the *status quo*, and offered to the struggling masses nothing but an opiate to dull their pain until they could reach some other world, the Christianity has lost its power and finally, as in Red Russia, been swept into the discard.

There is strong suspicion today that that is what is happening to the Christian church even here in America. Whatever decline there is today in church loyalty and church attendance is principally among the poor and the working

classes. The rich and the privileged, never very faithful, are still about as much concerned with the church as ever. But the underprivileged of our economic system in increasing numbers have been turning away from the church. Some of the most bitter foes of the modern church are found in the ranks of labor because of a belief that the church is now nothing more than a social club, interested in maintaining an unrighteous economic order and taking its orders from those who are able to endow it with rich gifts.

Meanwhile the church encourages this attitude by shifting more and more the burden of its benevolences to the willing shoulders of government, and by loudly proclaiming peace in areas where there is no peace.

The longed for spiritual revival in our day will come only when and if the church preaches with vigor the social implications of its gospel and its heart begins to break with divine compassion for human need. "Did Christ o'er sinners weep, and shall our tears be dry?"

The third great need of the modern church is for genuine enthusiasm. The evidence of its present lack is found in the listlessness of many of our services of worship, in the preaching of innocuous platitudes from many of our pulpits, and in the widespread indifference of many church members. I cannot wonder at scanty congregations, however, when I listen to the plaintive drag of much congregational singing and look at the bored faces of those who sit patiently or impatiently through dull sermons. Many of our very best church folks will frankly confess that they are painfully bored by the whole thing, but that they continue going to church because they feel it is their duty to do so.

Fascism and Communism in our day are terribly wrong in their political and social theories and practices. But one thing they do have that accounts for their onward sweep, and that is enthusiasm, a very contagious enthusiasm. Christianity has not always lacked it. The early Christians had a fervor and a zeal for their gospel that sent them forth to share it though persecution and martyrdom impeded.

If Christians could but see it, they have a cause that merits enthusiasm. Its foundation in both theory and practice are far stronger than that upon which Fascism and Communism rest. Its purpose is nobler, its methods are finer, its triumph more assured. "Let those refuse to sing who never knew our God, but children of the heavenly king may shout their joys abroad."

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

Overcoming the Adversary.

LESSON: Rev. 12:1—15:4. Print Rev. 12:7-12; 15:2-4.

GOLDEN TEXT: "And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb, and because of the word of their testimony; and they loved not their life even unto death." Rev. 12:11.

DEVOTIONAL READING: Psalm 27:1-6.

INTER. & SR. TOPIC: The Christian's Way of Winning.

Y. P. & ADULTS: The Basis of Ultimate Victory.

Chapter 12 begins the central section of the book of Revelation. The section includes chapters 12, 13 and 14. The section opens with an intro-

ductory vision. The indication is that all of the enemies of the Church are controlled by Satan, the great enemy. He stands behind all the powers of evil and is himself the evil one. The Church is depicted as a woman arrayed with the sun and moon under her feet and upon her head a crown of twelve stars. (Compare Joseph's dream in Genesis 37:9.) The woman is the type of Israel but the ideal Israel as represented at the time of Christ's birth by such righteous ones as Zachariah and Elisabeth, Mary and Joseph, and Anna and Simeon, and in later times by the faithful followers of Christ. The woman is pictured as about to give birth to a child but before her stands a great red dragon ready to devour the child when it is delivered. His color, red, the color of blood, indicates his cruel malice and deadly hate. His seven heads and ten horns are emblematic of world-wide power, and sovereignty. The child, being delivered, is caught up unto God and unto His Throne. The reference, of course, is to the peril of our Lord at the time of His birth and includes reference also to His Ascension. The entire aim of the author here is to show the deadly and undying enmity of the Adversary, his final defeat and the exaltation of Christ to the place of supreme and universal power. The wrath of the evil one is then turned toward the Church. Satan is a personality. The Devil is a real being, not simply "evil" spelled with a capital D in front of it. While the conflict between righteousness and unrighteousness, between God and Satan, is very long and very real and very bitter, there can be no question as to its final outcome. Satan is powerful, but not all-powerful.

The teacher should insist upon certain truths.

1. It is no sin to be tempted. Christ Himself was tempted again and again and tempted far more strongly than any of us shall ever be.
2. With every temptation strength is increased and we are enabled more and more to overcome.
3. Temptation is to be met in the same way in which Christ met it, by storing the mind and heart with truths and the words and teaching of Scripture.
4. No temptation overtakes us without a way of escape.
5. Righteousness is a more wonderful thing than innocence. Innocence is untried virtue. Righteousness is virtue which has been tested, tried, and has stood the test.

EVENING SERMON

THEME: *Human Automobility.*

(A Sermon for Young People.)

HAROLD E. CARLSON, D. D.

TEXT: "I am full of power by the Spirit of the Lord." *Micah* 3:8.
HYMNS: "We may not climb the Heavenly steeps . . ."—*Serenity, C. M.*
"I'm pressing on the upward way. . . ."—*Higher Ground,* 8s.

I have chosen for a theme what I entitle, "Human Automobility." I venture to say that you have never before heard or seen the word, "*Automobility.*" And I have never heard nor seen the word before I coined it. Yet I

believe that here is a term which may be rich in spiritual suggestion for us.

"Automobility!" What is the meaning of the term? "Auto" is from the Greek and means "self." "Mobile" is from the Latin and means "movable." "Automobility" then, is something that is "self-movable"—that is, it is not drawn by horses or any power which may be attached to it. We may, therefore, define "automobile" as a vehicle which runs by power carried *in* it. And "automobility" is then a term meaning the capacity for self-movement.

Every human being is a self-moving soul. Every person is largely the master of his own spiritual development. "Human Automobility," in the highest and finest sense of the term, may therefore designate the capacity for most perfect spiritual progress. I wish to humanize this term "automobility" in order that we may see its significance in the development of our spiritual lives.

There are four factors essential to good "automobility."

I. A GOOD MOTOR.

Do you remember the earliest automobile? I shall never forget the first automobile I saw in my life. It was a two-cylinder machine. It had self-movement to be sure, but such self-movement as it had was mighty hard on the occupants of the car. One of the cylinders was firing harder than the other. What was the result? Every five or six feet the car plunged forward with a jerk. And you could tell this a block down the street watching the driver's head. Every time the car jerked forward, back jerked his head.

The motor is the power creator of the automobile. A two-cylinder motor has been found to be uneven distribution of power compared with four, six or eight cylinder motors. An expert mechanic once told me that the motor of the future would probably be sixteen small cylinders with small bore to give balanced and uniform power. In the last analysis the motor is simply the creator of the power resident in volatile gasoline, when ignited.

The motor of the automobile may be compared to the creation of power, morally and spiritually, in a person. There are persons who have sufficient spiritual power in the church but it is pathetically unequally distributed. We are all acquainted with people who have consecrated wills and minds to a marked degree, who never make the Grade of Life because they do not apply their spiritual power equally. They make some progress on the level in a jerky manner. But when they strike the Hills of Temptation, the Inclines of Difficult Problems, and the Rocky Roads of Trial and Suffering, they are unable to reach the end of the way. They can coast down the hills in the places of Easy Traveling, but they get stuck in the regions of Trying Circumstances. The reason is that there is a vital difference between motor power and motive power. Both are power but good intention alone does not spell moral achievement. Goethe has well said:

> "Only engage, and then the mind grows heated;
> Begin, and then the work will be completed."

Spiritual victories are not achieved by mere wishing and hoping that Righteousness shall prevail. Prayer is power, but it is powerless without the "Amen" of service. The Kingdom of Heaven is not ushered in by merely offering long prayers. Holy desire must be linked with actual living service.

That man is a poor spiritual motor in whom aspiration and faith, and works and services are not balanced and equally distributed.

II. A WELL ADJUSTED CARBURETOR.

Automobile mechanics call the carburetor the "stomach" of the motor. If your motor runs sluggishly, look to the carburetor for the trouble. When my motor runs sluggishly the improper adjustment of the carburetor goes to the kind of food I have put into its "stomach." For if the carburetor is loaded with indigestible matter such as water, dirt or grease, the motor will not be giving efficient performance.

Spiritual "automobility" depends upon what we feed our souls. We cannot feed them low-minded earthy things and have spiritual power. "Man does not live by bread alone." But what, then, is our duty as regards the carburetor of our automobiles in order that we shall have good performance of the motor? The expert mechanic tells us, "Don't meddle with the adjustment of your carburetor." The mechanical engineer at the factory has adjusted the carburetor of the motor for perfect "automobility." And the same rule holds for "human automobility." The adjustment of our souls must be made by God in Christ or we lack in power and are unable to make the Grade of Life. To seek to accommodate our lives to the standards of the world is to live down to the ideals of men, instead of living up to God in Christ. "Ye shall receive power when the Holy Spirit is come upon you." "Ye must be born again." The adjustment of our souls is made when we are "born again."

III. A GOOD BATTERY.

You may have a splendid motor and perfectly adjusted carburetor, but unless the battery is "live" there can be no "automobility." If the battery fails to send an electric flash through the wires there are four dead wheels.

Unless the heart is spiritually "live" there is no "human automobility." Without the glow of the love of Christ in the heart, a man is spiritually dead.

I knew a pastor whom people heard gladly. He was not an eloquent preacher, yet the church people spoke of him as a wonderful orator. His brother, also a minister, on one occasion, preached at the morning service. He was more eloquent and a more easy speaker than his brother. But his appearance and his manners and the spirit of his sermon were cold and unattractive. He failed to hold the large congregation assembled to hear him. The people had come with great hopes but they were sadly disappointed. And he realized it himself. After the sermon I overheard him remark to his brother: "I cannot understand how it is that the moment you begin preaching the people lean forward, straining, as it were, to get every word you say. But when I preach they lean back in their seats indifferent and soon some of them are asleep." His brother said nothing. I knew the reason and could have given him the answer. There was no spark of love in his preaching, or in his life. His brother radiated a genuine human love and spirit of sympathy for needy men. But he was like "sounding brass and a clanging cymbal" because he spoke with the tongue of men and had not the spontaneous glow of human love for fellowmen. His heart was not alive, from which "are the issues of life."

Without the spark of the love of Christ in the heart there is no "human automobility," only a human machine. To go up the Grade of Life requires

more than intellect, eloquence, and formal living. There must be the glow of the love of Christ issuing forth from the heart in spontaneous service.

IV. Good gasoline.

You may have an automobile with a wonderful motor, a perfect and properly adjusted carburetor, and a powerful battery, and yet have a "dead" car without proper fuel. Good gasoline is the automobile's "bread of life." For without good gasoline the best automobile cannot make a grade. In making a cross-country tour I was ascending the foothills of the Rockies. I realized that the carburetor was not functioning properly. Now and then there was a decided lack of power in the motor. Reaching a town I decided that I must have the carburetor examined before attempting to climb the steeps. The mechanic took the carburetor apart and found that it had water in it. The trouble was all my own fault. Some miles back I had seen a large advertisement of cheap gasoline. It looked like such a bargain to me so I stocked up with nearly a tank full. But before leaving the town where I was stranded I had to empty the tank of every drop of my "bargain" gasoline. I learned that cheap gas costs more and does not spell good "automobility." After filling up with good gas I made the steep ascent as easily as running on the level.

This is a parable. We cannot feed our souls cheap spiritual food and have spiritual power. Unless we have something within us that produces power we cannot reach the Heights. When we feed upon the Manna of Life we can ascend, for it gives spiritual power. Some spiritual food is like aeroplane gas. The automobile driver knows the difference between ordinary gasoline and aeroplane gas. Aeroplane gas produces quicker and more lively combustion but there is no more power than in ordinary gasoline. Feeding the soul on religious sentiment will warm the spirits and generate surface feelings, but there is little or no manifestation of deep conviction and challenge of the nobler self to prompt, living, Christlikeness.

Good "automobility" requires a good motor, a properly adjusted carburetor, a live battery, and good gasoline. "Human automobility"—spiritual life—finds its counterparts in all of these. A good motor answers to a living faith—the fundamental basis of spiritual power. And faith must be balanced by works. The carburetor answers to regeneration—a thorough rebirth through God in Christ. The battery answers to a love of Christ that prompts spontaneous service. Good gas answers to Bread of Life—appropriation of solid, unadulterated spiritual food through regular, real worship. A soul with these qualities is "full of power by the Spirit of God."

MID-WEEK SERMON

Theme: ***The Roadmender.***

TEXT: Philippians 2:4.

An old man with a basket on his arm, stooping to pick loose pieces of metal off the road and drop in his basket. A roadmender. "My business is to make travel easier for other people." Paul urges the Christian virtue of

making life easier for other people. "Each with an eye to the interests of others as well as to his own."—Moffatt.

The Three Graces: Courtesy: this generation seems to be losing it. Failure in courtesy springs from selfishness and a lack of self-control. The grace of sympathy. We depute the Community Chest to be sympathetic for us. Good, but no agency should be permitted to dry up in our own hearts the springs of fellow-feeling. The grace of gratitude. "An ungrateful child is sharper than a serpent's tooth."—King Lear. Thankfulness should be an habitual attitude of the Christian life. 1 Thess. 5:16-18.

The Conquest of Self: The decisive battle in personality. Until self retires into the background we have never fully caught the spirit of our Lord.

The Service of Love: The use we make of our victory: text. "Treat one another with the same spirit as you experience in Christ Jesus." An Italian artist carved a new crucifix. In it, Christ has pulled his right hand loose from the nail and is reaching down to help someone at the foot of the Cross. "Each with an eye to the interests of others as well as to his own."

TOPICS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE'S SOCIETIES

CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR: Y. P.—Bulwarks of Democracy. Education in Democracy. Prov. 16:16. Eccl. 2:26, 7:11-12. I Kings 3:7-9, 4:29-30.
Jr.—Christ Calls to Service. Matt. 10:1-11.
LUTHER LEAGUE: Sr.—Serving Our Church. Acts 6:1-14.
Y. P.—Christ in Art. Music. Col. 3:16.
Inter.—The Sun. Psalm 19:1-6.
WALTHER LEAGUE: September Topic, Health and Habits. Problems. Work conditions. Faith healers. Col. 4:14. Health as a Nation. Compare with other Nations. Health and Display or exhibitions or tournaments, contests.

FOR THE BULLETIN BOARD

New horizons wait your soul.
You see beyond the rise, only when you surmount it.
Why should common danger be necessary before we consider common care?
The passing hours are yours to number as you will.
It is later than your wristwatch shows.
Time enough to worry about problems when they come. Most of them don't.
Our hope doesn't spring eternal. It needs constant renewal.
Does your day swing by on a rusty hinge?
Your eternity is in your every second.

SEPTEMBER, FOURTH SUNDAY

CALL TO WORSHIP: "The Lamb that is in the midst of the throne shall be their Shepherd, and shall guide them unto fountains of waters of life; and God shall wipe away every tear from their eyes."
PSALM: 8.
PRELUDE: Autumn—*Johnston.*
ANTHEM: This Is The Day—*Berwald.*
OFFERTORY: A Shepherd's Prayer—*Nevin.*
POSTLUDE: Festal Postlude—*Rockwell.*
OFFERTORY SENTENCE: "Be not afraid when one is made rich, when the glory of his house is increased; for when he dieth, he shall carry nothing away, and his glory shall not descend after him."
OFFERTORY PRAYER: We reach up to Thee in our effort to reflect Thy love and care of Thy children, and we glory in the grace Thou hast sown in our hearts. Accept these our gifts for Thy work, and speed the day of greater love and kindness among men on earth.
BENEDICTION: "The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus."

SERMONS

THEME: ***The Second Chapter in the Life of Jesus.***

HUGH THOMSON KERR, D. D.

TEXT: "All that Jesus began both to do and to teach." Acts 1:1.
HYMNS: "O Christ, our true and only Light . . ."—*St. Oswald, L. M.*
"Teach me, my God and King. . . ."—*St. Andrews, S. M.*

It is impossible to get past the first verse in the Book of the Acts. It arrests the reader like a red light does the driver on the highway. It is part of St. Luke's introduction to his second chapter in the life of Christ. It was Luke who gave us the third gospel which Renan called "the most beautiful book in the world." That first book was the first chapter in the life of Christ. It contains the story of what Jesus began to do and to teach. This second book continues that same story. In a rather modest introduction Luke says, "The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach." We know nothing of Theophilus except in his gospel Luke speaks of him as "most excellent Theophilus." Perhaps he was a patron of literature or a catechumen of distinction in whom Luke was interested. How much we would miss if we did not have that "former treatise." We would miss the Christmas story of the shepherds, the Gloria in Excelsis, the Magnificat, the Benedictus, and the Nunc Dimittis. We would miss the evangelical parables of the lost sheep and the lost son and the good Samaritan. We would miss the beauty and charm of the walk to Emmaus on the first Easter, and the revelation of the character of Jesus as presented by the "beloved physician."

Luke was not satisfied with bringing the story of Jesus to an end with His resurrection. To him it was only the first chapter in the continuing life of the Lord Jesus. It was the story of what Jesus began to do and to teach. It contained the story of Christmas and Good Friday and Easter morning, but it was only a beginning. In this second chapter in the life of Jesus, St. Luke goes on to tell us what He was still doing, for Luke knew that Jesus was still at work. He was neither dead nor gone away into some distant heaven. He

was alive and at work on earth among men. When Easter is over we put away our Easter music and our Easter hymns until another year. The evangelist Luke will not have it so. It is always Easter morning to the Christian and the Easter music is always sung where the followers of Christ gather. St. Luke would have us understand that Jesus is still at work, and at the same work and at the same teaching which He began in the days of His flesh. What was that work and what was that teaching? What is it He continues to do not only in the Book of the Acts but in the twentieth century? At least two things.

I.

First of all, He continues to work among people. He was always interested in folks. That is one of the remarkable things about the gospels and one of the reasons why the gospel story is so interesting. There we meet all kinds of people—sick folks and lepers, the blind and the lame, the rich and the poor, youth and age and childhood, the saint and the sinner, people with names and people without names. The gospel is full of people moving across the stage of life. The gospel is just like life. That is why Shakespeare is so interesting. You can count over eight hundred characters in the plays of Shakespeare and they belong to all conditions of life. Sir Walter Scott is said to have treated every man as a born brother. It was that way with Jesus. Everyone was interesting to Him and at the very beginning of this second chapter in His life we begin again to meet with folk. One by one the disciples are named all over again, Judas excepted. Here again we meet with James and John and Peter and Andrew, Bartholomew and Simon. They are all here, with Matthias appearing in the place of Judas.

And then we come upon the roll call of the nations. All sorts of people, "Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia." Later we meet the lame man, who is nameless, but whose experience is written into immortality. And then we are introduced to priests and captains and rulers and elders and scribes. Later we come upon Barnabas the generous; and Ananias and Sapphira, the betrayers of truth. We are introduced to Stephen, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas. And as we go on we meet Roman judges, and rhetoricians, magicians and governors, until we come into the presence of the emperor himself.

That is the kind of work Jesus began to do and continues to do. He did not talk about humanity but about this particular man. He separated each man from the crowd and took him apart and talked to him about God. Just as a carpenter drives one nail at a time, so Jesus builds His church one by one. He is satisfied to spend an hour, or a day, or a whole night with just one person. When He opened the door to the non-Jewish world, He did not hold a town meeting but He found Cornelius and led him into the gospel experience. When He wanted to plant the gospel in Europe, He did not send a commission but He became a friend to one man, the man of Macedonia. When He introduced the gospel to the capital city of Macedonia, He did not visit the synagogue or the market place but He opened the door of new life to Lydia. When He lifted the burden from slavery and introduced the

healing influences of the gospel to paganism, He led one slave—Onesimus—into the Kingdom.

That was Jesus' way. It was the way of the early church and it must be the way of the church today. Whatever truth there is in mass movements, men cannot be made Christians in crowds. We enter the Kingdom of God one by one. God is mindful of one sparrow. He is careful of one little child. Just as we come into the world one by one, and pass into eternity one by one, so must we enter the Kingdom of God. The real end of human history, the purpose and meaning of life, finds its fulfillment in a Christian soul; and the purposes of God in Christ Jesus are fulfilled when we come unto the stature of the perfect man in Christ Jesus.

II.

Jesus continues to deal with what we call human relations. He began to do and to teach concerning the fellowship that should characterize His followers. In other words He began to build the Christian Church. In the days of His flesh He spoke little about the church, but He did begin to build it. To Peter and the disciples He said, "On this rock I will build my church." That was the beginning and now He continues to build. He builds the church around Himself. Christians are not individualists. They enter the Kingdom one by one but when they enter they are in a fellowship, a community, a society. It is impossible for character to grow in solitude. The Christian does not go out into the desert or out into the woods by himself, he builds a meeting place where the friends of Christ may come together and sing, "Come, we that love the Lord."

III.

Jesus began and continues the preaching of the gospel. If you will go through the Book of the Acts you will find some six or seven outlines of apostolic sermons. Taking only the preaching of St. Peter, let us give briefly the outlines of his sermons.

The first sermon that we come upon is Peter's sermon at Pentecost. It is as follows: "Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain . . . This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses . . . Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."

The second sermon follows the healing of the lame man. "Ye men of Israel, the God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified his Son Jesus; whom ye delivered up, and denied him in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let him go. But ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you; and killed the Prince of life, whom God hath raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses . . . Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that

your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord."

The third sermon is delivered by St. Peter at the time of his trial before the Jewish Council. "Ye rulers of the people, Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole. This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved."

The fourth sermon follows Peter's imprisonment. "We ought to obey God rather than men. The God of our Father raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins."

Peter's fifth sermon is given in the home of Cornelius where he says: "God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil: for God was with him; whom they slew and hanged on a tree: Him God raised up the third day, and showed him openly; And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead. To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins."

Mark Rutherford in one of his essays says that if he could lay hold upon two or three divine ideas he would be willing to throw away all his library. Well, in this preaching we lay hold upon two or three divine ideas. Here is presented in brief and simple language the story of the life, the death, the resurrection of our Lord. And you will notice that these ideas or facts are repeated in each of the sermons. That is why preaching is so difficult. It is repetitious. It goes over the same story again and again. Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God, who was crucified, risen—those are the facts. Now what are you going to do about it? Repent, believe this gospel. The early church knew its message and delivered it. It proclaimed it, going everywhere as witnesses of the fact of Christ, heralding His life and teaching, His death and resurrection, His living presence and demanding that life should be conformed to the moral demands of this great truth—the most marvelous, the most arresting, the most transforming in all human history. The early church knew its goal and knew its message. Do we know our goal and do we know our message? It is said that one day an old lady, wandering on Princess Street in the city of Edinburgh, was found by a friendly passer-by who said, "Is there anything I can do for you?" The woman laid hold upon her, as if in great distress, saying, "O please help me. I am blind and I have lost my nerve and I have lost my way." There are those who speak sometimes as if the modern church was blind and had lost its nerve and had lost its way. But they are wrong. The Christian Church is not blind, it has not lost its nerve, it has not lost its way. For it knows and still proclaims the gospel that there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved.

Sixteenth Sunday After Trinity.

THEME: *The Universality of Jesus.*

THOMAS J. LACEY, PH. D.

TEXT: "There were certain Greeks among them that came up to worship at the feast." John 12:20.

HYMNS: "Jesus still lead on. . . ."—*Seelenbrautigam,* 55, 88, 55.
"My hope is built on nothing less . . ."—*Melita,* 88, 88, 88.

This incident occurred at the close of our Lord's ministry. Some Greeks sought his presence. His prophetic eye read in their earnest faces the whole drama of Christian progress. In their language the New Testament was written. In their language the gospel was preached. St. Paul carried the message to Europe, moving with triumphal step to the very crest of Mars Hill in Athens. In their language the Nicene Creed was formulated. The early fathers of the Church were all Greeks—Athanasius and Basil, the Gregories and golden-tongued Chrysostom.

Three cities played an outstanding role in the life of the ancient world. Jerusalem and Solomon's temple were the splendid incarnation of a Hebrew passion for God. The Jew created the prophets. Rome and the forum suggest law, discipline. The ideal of Rome was the soldier. The keynote of Latin civilization was power. In the graceful lines of Virgil the destiny of Rome was to rule the nations. The Parthenon was the symbol of Hellas. It embodied in stone harmony, symmetry, beauty. Athens stood for culture. The Greeks seek after wisdom, declares St. Paul. They were creative. The earliest name in every department of learning is a Greek name—Herodotus in history, Plato in philosophy, Aeschylus and Sophocles in the drama, Euclid in geometry, Aristotle in logic, Hippocrates in medicine.

Cicero, who became the interpreter of Greece to the Roman world, declared: 'Greek poets are read among all nations, while the Latin tongue is confined to its natural limits, which are very narrow.'

Our atmosphere today is unconsciously charged with the Hellenic spirit. In our architecture we reproduce Ionic, Doric or Corinthian. In our science we borrow Greek terms. Our spiritual ancestry is of Greece, which Shelley says is 'enthroned on the crystalline sea of thought and its eternity.'

But side by side with these Greeks seeking Jesus at the close of His ministry I would ask you to place another scene. It occurred at the beginning of Christ's life. It is indissolubly connected with Christmas. Wise men from the East sought the cradle of the divine infant. They are shrouded in romance and mystery. A verse in one of the Psalms led to the belief that they were kings—a tradition embodied in our familiar carol 'We Three Kings of Orient Are.' Professor Jackson thinks they were Persians, disciples of Zoroaster. An ancient legend represents one as an Ethiopian. They journeyed by camel over mountains and desert to pay fealty to Jesus.

I learn then that Christ is the great unifier. To Him the Greeks yield homage. At His cradle the Orient offers gifts.

Kipling in his day declared:

> For East is East and West is West,
> And never the twain shall meet.

How reconcile the active, energetic, nervous temperament of the West with the calm, passive, immobile attitude of the East.

The answer is found in Christ. Christ is God's magnet to draw all mankind to Himself. Each man sees in Christ the expression of his highest self.

We are set today in the midst of turmoil, strife, suspicion, class conflict and race prejudice. The only remedy for our ills is found in Christ and His Church, which proclaims the oneness of all men in its fellowship, where there is neither Jew nor Greek, circumcision nor uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free, but Christ is all and in all. The Church is a spiritual democracy and knows no limitation of race, color or speech. She speaks to all men in the common language of love and brotherhood.

While these principles are implicit in our Christian faith, there is incisive call in these times to apply them in a clear, practical way. We must never yield to race prejudices or religious intolerance. We must seek agreements with our fellows and stress the things we hold in common. The Church is inclusive, not exclusive. She seeks to gather men in, not to drive any one out. We must cultivate sympathy, broadmindedness, inclusiveness. We must learn to think in terms of the whole, not in terms of any particular party or class."

I remember a little wooden Church in the Berkshires. One winter's night a fire broke out. The Church fell prey to the flames. The roof had fallen. The tower toppled. The windows were broken. The chancel was gone. Only the arch was standing and an inscription in gold. The words were these —one fold and one shepherd even Christ.

PRAYER

Eternal God, Thou hast in Thy great wisdom created man and placed him in a world that demands high faith and unceasing struggle and effort, not only to meet the needs of hourly existence but to carry forward the torch of Divine life within him.

Through the love of Jesus Christ, we here have been favored with an awareness of Thee as the Loving Father of all mankind; likewise entrusted with the great responsibility of going forth to tell others and still others of Thy message of Salvation.

Give us grateful hearts for the great trust Thou hast placed upon us, and give us strength and wisdom and willingness to live up to this trust. Help us to hold and carry an abiding faith in the knowledge that Thou wilt care for our needs, according to the measure of zeal expended in carrying out Thy will among men. Help us to abandon all thought of self, so that we may lose ourselves in Thee and Thy mission among men.

Give us the wisdom to discern at a distance those paths which lead away from Thee, and those which lead to Thee. Open our eyes to the sinful purposes of that which shuts out the thought of Immortal Life within us. Help us to climb the rough, lonely and steep paths that will lead the children of men to higher levels. Reveal to us clearly that the world cannot be saved by those things which evade duty and withhold compassion. Instill in our hearts the sure knowledge that these are days for uncompromising character, a day

for self-less service. Help us to look upon the pattern upon the Cross, help us to understand the great love emanating from that symbol of sacrifice and self-forgetfulness. Make Thy face to shine in our hearts, thus making possible an endless flow of good will, sympathy and understanding of the needs of those yet to be brought to Thee. We ask in Jesus' Name. Amen.

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

The Fulfilment of History: The New Jerusalem.

LESSON: Rev. 21-22. Print Rev. 21:1-7, 10-12, 22-24.

GOLDEN TEXT: "He that overcometh shall inherit these things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son." Rev. 21:7.

DEVOTIONAL READING: Isaiah 11:1-9.

INTER. & SR. TOPIC: The Life That Is to Be.

Y. P. & ADULTS: The Glorious Consummation.

These chapters of the book of Revelation are the Divine Architect's plan of the building not made with hands, eternal in the Heavens. John's picture of the New Jerusalem cheered the discouraged Christians of his day.

"The first heaven and the first earth were passed away," said John and Astronomy and Geology are coming more and more to prove literally what was revealed to John supernaturally. They show us that everything in this apparently solid universe is flowing and transient. The earth's inner fires will die and the oceans will sink downward as the earth cools, leaving a cracked, lifeless globe like the moon. The sun will lose its heat and light as thousands of suns have already done. The fixed stars, so-called, are not fixed but are dashing through space at giddy velocities. The heavens and the earth *are* passing away.

The great voice which John heard out of Heaven was a voice with a great message, the statement was that the tabernacle of God was with *men, all men* everywhere. His purpose is a world-wide purpose and His Kingdom is a world-wide Kingdom which knows no barrier of race or color, of sea, or mountain, of time or place. "And they shall be His people." The Revised Version says "peoples," and the use of the word in the plural has a significance. All nations shall be God's people. Knowledge of Him, obedience to Him, reverence toward Him, life with Him shall be the lot of all everywhere who will so receive it.

Verses 4-7 picture the heavenly joys. Much of our thinking and talking about Heaven is superficial and entirely mistaken. Heaven is a place of joyous employment in the work of the King. "There His servants shall serve Him."

2. Heaven is a place of growth. "We shall know as we are known."

3. Heaven is a place of clear sight, spiritual. We shall see no longer through a glass darkly but face to face.

4. Heaven is a place of reunion. We shall be with those who have gone before and with Him. "That where I am there ye may be also."

5. Heaven is a place of release. No more pain, no more sorrow, no more tears, no more sighing.

6. Heaven is a place of recognition. We shall know our loved ones there.
7. Heaven is a place of freedom. The gates are open.
8. Heaven is a place of safety. The walls are around the city.

The figures used in the description of Heaven are, of course, not to be taken literally. The writer gathered together every beautiful thought, every lovely expression, every gorgeous phrase, that his mind could conceive or his pen write, and heaped them all together in one glorious pile, and then says, "Heaven is like that, only much better. "For eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, neither has entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him." We can be sure that Heaven is much more glorious than we had ever dreamed.

He that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. Chicago was renewed by fire. A magnificent city, much finer than the old one, sprung up from its ashes. The world is renewed every year, freshness and beauty springing from Winter's frost and snow. But neither fire nor frost are needed for the renewals of Heaven. It will be as the Bible tells us more like a sleep, and an awaking into Eternal beauty and strength. God, with a word, can make all things new but it took agony, the agony of Christ on the cross, to make man new. "It is finished," cried our Saviour on the cross. That was the beginning of the New Heaven and earth, and our lesson today pictures the completion of the process. It does not mean that in Heaven there is to be no more progress. Certainly not. There we shall learn, we shall grow continually in grace and knowledge. And we shall serve.

EVENING SERMON

THEME: ***The Misuse of Knowledge.***

FRANCIS C. VIELE, D. D.

TEXTS: "My people are destroyed for the lack of knowledge." Hosea 4:6. Also, Hab. 2:14, and I Cor. 4:7.
HYMNS: "Teach me, my God and King . . ."—*St. Andrews, S. M.*
"God of Pity, God of Grace. . . ."—*Irene,* 777, 5.

In a strain of authority that cannot be disturbed by the speculative genius of men, Hosea, the divinely appointed spokesman for the Lord said: "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge." And in a like vein of expression, Isaiah declared: "my people are gone into captivity because they have no knowledge."

It is not out of place to think of these prophetic utterances as really meaning that the people of that day were destroying themselves because of their failure to make use of the right kind of knowledge. Their knowledge of heathen worship and other subjects was evidently utilized instead of making use of the knowledge of God that all the divinely chosen prophets were commissioned to impart. But they chose to follow other lines of opportunity and action which resulted in moral degradation and spiritual impoverishment. This course of conduct is largely descriptive of the history of ancient Israel and ultimately led to their dispersion among the nations of the world. There were always enough exceptions, however, to this ruling trait of a potentially

great people, that the words of the Psalmist could have been repeated and applied with special aptitude when he said: ". . . now may Israel say; if it had not been the Lord who was on our side, when men rose up against us, then they had swallowed us up quickly, when their wrath was kindled against us."

The undertaking to make the Lord's chosen people intelligent and representative members of "the commonwealth of Israel" has long been a matter of historic significance, which as a whole, can be pertinently known as an example of an ungrateful people. And yet there is no reason for believing that we would have been more deserving of commendation had we served in their stead. Our own record in dealing with the Providential advantages of this day cannot be mentioned in terms of unstinted praise.

In fact if we were to limit our thought to proportionate examples of faithfulness, based upon the number of people involved, the showing of ancient times is something worthy of grateful recognition. The light of present day opportunities is sufficient to show us the way leading to spheres of greater accomplishment than the combined achievements that are mentioned in the records of ancient races. But to realize the larger blessings that will result from the advanced stages of present forms of civilized life depend upon our disposition to accept our share of responsibility and press forward toward the challenging heights of ever-present obligations.

The prophet uttered the words of the text as a lamentation, and at the same time they were intended as a challenge to turn the thoughts of his people toward God as the only source of their moral awakening and spiritual enlightenment.

The national situation was precarious, and the danger was magnified many fold because of the general failure of the people to discern the insecurity of the things which they allowed to rule their thoughts and actions. This condition had not, however, developed as a spontaneous manifestation of their designs, but was the slow maturing fruit of negligence and indifference.

This made it all the more difficult to renew their allegiance to the ideals of living, the recognition of which, had formerly made them a great people in the sight of God and in the opinion of other peoples. But instead of maintaining their standards of attainment in the earlier years of their national life, and seeking to shape the life of surrounding nations, they gradually adopted practices that were foreign to their needs as a specially favored people, and proved themselves unworthy of being the repository of the responsibilities that had been entrusted to their vigilance and defense. They were now destroying the last evidences of their hope in God because they ignored the knowledge that alone was needed to make them examples of faithfulness that would be worthy of the emulation of other nations.

The language of the prophet, which describes so forcefully the prevailing situation of ancient Israel, supplies an all-important lesson for our day and generation. The dissemination of knowledge relating to the multifarious phases of life has long been an important part of our national program. We have become so accustomed to the blessings that follow in the train of our attainments that self-confidence is a prominent quality in various lines of action.

We are in danger of allowing our acquirements to divert our minds from the basic authority of life's possibilities. The twentieth century is characterized by a more elaborate acquisition of information concerning life in its

varied forms than is true of any other age of history. But we must not dwell upon this fact to the exclusion of all thought pertaining to the contributions that have been made by those who have preceded us on this stage of action, and after serving their "day and generation fell on sleep." We should ever gratefully remember that "others have labored and we have entered into their labors."

But this does not invalidate the propriety of showing a liberal degree of appreciation of the use that has been made of our opportunities which has supplied a fund of knowledge that covers a vast territory of discovery that is world-wide in the range of its influence. Yet we should neither do nor say anything that could be construed as an example of our disposition to think of ourselves in terms of unbecoming estimation. Paul makes this prominently emphatic in his query as recorded in I Cor. 4:7: "What hast thou that thou didst not receive? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?" This life is a divinely conceived array of blessings which includes our privileges and all the essential attainments which distinguish our labors.

This makes the classification of the present life something that is inseparably related to the beneficence of God who "maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth his rain on the just and on the unjust." It then follows that man's special and individual viewpoint of life neither adds nor subtracts from the generous dealings of the heavenly Father with all ranks of humanity.

The prophet declared that his people were on the way to destruction because of their lack of essential knowledge. But his words cannot be said to describe precisely the present condition of our people as a whole. Our larger hopes are being destroyed by the use that is made of the widespread knowledge at our command. Knowledge is gradually becoming an end with ever-increasing numbers of people. Knowledge is often made a power for destruction instead of a force for the conservation of life's highest interests. While man is free to act in accordance with his inclinations, he is never granted the right to do that which is not in line with his needs. But we should ever bear in mind the fundamental difference between inherited freedom of action and the right to do anything that falls short of divine sanction. We are as free to do wrong as we are free to do right, but we do not have the right to do wrong. Indulgences have been granted in the name of the Christian religion, but this did not make such concessions right. There are more refined forms of indulgences granted today in certain religious circles that need not be named here, but to whatever extent or form it may be practiced, it has its roots in paganism and superstition. And were it not for the revenue involved in such transactions, the nefarious traffic would never have been countenanced and encouraged by religious leaders.

It is a matter of common observation that our thoroughgoing knowledge of many phases of life is being used to promote the selfish interests of certain lines of business. This is seen in the manipulations of some business leaders to secure their own interests regardless of the effect upon those whose investments are comparatively meagre, and therefore, will keenly feel the pressure of want that is brought to bear upon them by a depleted income. And often

as this is done the band of limitation that circumscribes the life of the average man is made a little more tense. If our knowledge of the Christian religion was always used with judicious consideration for men as a whole and not exemplified so extensively in what we have the ability to do for ourselves, millions now living would witness the miraculous transformation of the present life as forecast in the prophecy of Habakkuk 2:14; "For the earth shall be filled with knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea."

Our moral progress has not kept pace with our intellectual development. This is due to the change that has been effected in the manner of approaching men on the subject of religion. We refrain from speaking of life's religious needs in a vein of enthusiasm that features our references to politics and business. When personal experience and a change in the way of living were the sole conditions for the honors of church membership, it meant far more than it means now to be announced as a representative of the church. We are now hearing more about religious education than about religious experience. It is nothing uncommon to find people who do not appreciate the difference between intellectual understanding and spiritual discernment.

Nothing has transpired in the history of the church to render inoperative and impractical the teaching of Paul on the subject of a changed life when he said: "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things have passed away: behold all things are become new."

The increase of knowledge is the secret of progress in all the vocations of life, but the only kind of success that is worthy of perpetuation is the result of the ambition to use knowledge for increasing life's blessings for the greatest number of people.

Jesus came to make God known as the universal Father whose loving favors are the inheritance of all men. This all-revealing knowledge of the nature of God was designed to place all grades of human life upon a common level of obligation and responsibility. It is this knowledge and its application to life that has given the world the best forms of government and the highest types of civilization. And there is nothing that can take the place of the knowledge "that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself." And all who live in the light of that experience will never be threatened with destruction "for the lack of knowledge."

MID-WEEK SERMON

THEME: ***The Three Homes.***

TEXT: Hebrews 11:16.

"You know there are three homes, all a gift of our heavenly Father: our earthly home, our church home, our heavenly home."—F. J. Weertz.

A City of Homes: What makes a home: (1) a house; furnishings; children. (2) love; loyalty; service—mutual and reciprocal. (3) neighborliness; the community spirit.

A City of Churches: Settlers brought homes with them for they brought

the spirit of home-making. To them religion was an essential in their enterprise, and they brought it also. The Church was first in the Home. The same qualities go to the making of the Church as to the making of the Home. Fellowship; cooperative service; harmony; loyalty to the basic gospel.

A City Prepared: Our heavenly Home. Mark Twain on hearing of the death of Matthew Arnold: "Poor Arnold! He has gone to heaven, and he will not like it!" Heaven is made and prepared for here. Our earthly homes project our heavenly.

(This outline is prepared for a Community Day, or a Founders' Day, or some such special day. Each man will fill it out with local material that is in point.)

TOPICS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE'S SOCIETIES

CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR: Y. P.—Religion in a Democracy. Psa. 144:9-15.
Jr.—Christ Calls to Fellowship. John 17:20-26.

WALTHER LEAGUE: September Topic—Health Habits. Service Project—Arrange lecture by recognized physician or public health officer. Discuss progress of Science in Medicine. Effect on race. Compare life span with former generations. Insurance Companies will provide statistics.

FOR THE BULLETIN BOARD

Differences always divide. Love always multiplies.
Even you will admit the difference between the ways of force and love.
The law of a king is service, even your King.
Sufferings are numberless where sorrow is a host.
Get under some common burden.
Why live in a dark basement when the upper floors are vacant?
It is never the liver of a faith who quarrels about it.
Truth needs investigation rather than defence.

OCTOBER, FIRST SUNDAY

CALL TO WORSHIP: "I bow my knee unto the Father, from Whom every family in Heaven and on earth is named, that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, that ye may be strengthened with power through His Spirit."
PSALM: 150.
PRELUDE: Chant de Bonheur—*Lemare.*
ANTHEM: O Lamb of God—*Ambrose.*
OFFERTORY: Vesperale—*Scott.*
POSTLUDE: Postludium in F—*Rink.*
OFFERTORY SENTENCE: "Vow, and pay unto Jehovah your God; let all that are round about Him bring presents unto Him that ought to be feared."
OFFERTORY PRAYER: We come to Thee with our portion, even as Thou hast spoken. We bring only that which Thou in Thy love hast given unto us, and we ask Thee to bless it to Thy service.
BENEDICTION: And the God of peace Himself sanctify you wholly; and may your spirit and soul and body he preserved entire, without blame, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

SERMONS

THEME: *Barriers to God.*

TEUNIS E. GOUWENS, D. D.

TEXT: "The world knew not God . . ." I Cor. 1:21.
HYMNS: "Teach me, my God and King. . . ."—*St. Andrews, S. M.*
"Thy way, not mine, O Lord . . ."—*Ibstone,* 66, 66.

Those who do not wish to know God are very few. Those who seek him but find him only in part are legion. But we are all capable of a larger understanding than we have reached. Why do we fall short of that understanding? It is certainly not because God is concealing himself. If we fail to reach that assurance of the Eternal which is possible for us, it must be on account of certain barriers in our own lives.

I. INTELLECTUALISM.

It will be objected at once that the intellect is not a hindrance but rather a help in the quest for truth. The prophet represents God as saying to his people, "Come now, and let us reason together." Jesus again and again addressed his hearers with an appeal for reflection. When a problem was presented to Him, He often replied by asking, "What do you think?" From the time of Paul until today, the search for God has engaged the best thought of mankind. It would be folly to contend that the human race has made no progress in spiritual life by the path of intellect.

But the intellect also can be a barrier. It becomes such a barrier when religion exhausts itself in mere argumentation and exchange of ideas. The creeds which have lived for centuries will have little meaning if they are presented simply as documents to be accepted. They should be scrutinized; but the scrutiny will be of little avail if no convictions are reached, or if such convictions as are reached find no expression in life. The benefits of discussion are turned to loss when the participants adopt as their goal the mere defense of their positions.

Intellectualism becomes a barrier when a man refuses to accept Christianity because he cannot fully understand it. The Deity of Christ, the Atone-

ment, the Resurrection and other elements in the Christian faith lie beyond the range of human comprehension. But the mystery involved need not prevent a man from becoming a Christian. Paul spoke of the mystery of the Gospel, but the limitations of his knowledge did not interfere with his allegiance to Christ. No Christian has *ever* fully understood all the implications of the Gospel. When a man refuses to become a Christian because there are some things he cannot understand, he is either mistaken in his conception of what Jesus requires or insincere in his intentions to follow Him.

Once more, intellectualism becomes a barrier when it leads to a confusion which inhibits action. In our schools, conferences and books, all sorts of opinions on religious truth are presented.

> "Myself, when young, did eagerly frequent
> Doctor and Saint, and heard great Argument
> About it and about: but evermore
> Came out by the same Door as in I went."

A young woman, who had just returned from a religious conference, described the barrier of which we are speaking when she said, "I have hundreds of new ideas. What I want now is the courage to put a single one of them into operation in my life."

The intellect is important for an approach to God, but we must not permit our religion to dissipate in argument, we must not reject Christianity because we cannot understand it all, nor shall we become so absorbed in ideas that we slight the challenge of Christ to live by his spirit.

II. SERVICE.

The world needs more and not less unselfish ministry than it receives. By the path of service many in all generations have advanced in the direction of God. Nevertheless service may become a barrier. There are forms of humanism in which efforts for the sway of beauty, justice and goodness are divorced from faith in God. There are social workers who scorn the church for her emphasis on worship and her neglect of human need. There are Christians who condemn other Christians for being pious without being practical. For multitudes, service has become a substitute for religion.

When service becomes a substitute for religion, it is apt to lose its heart. When activity diminishes the fervor of devotion, the soul is likely to lose its direction. When works are substituted for faith, the light that shines on the path of God grows dim.

There was a disagreement between Martha and Mary in their entertainment of Jesus. "Martha was cumbered about much serving." She was distracted by the multiplicity of her duties. In her restlessness and peevishness she was like the nervous, preoccupied world in which we live. When she brought her complaint to Jesus, she received this gentle rebuke: "Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her."

Rufus M. Jones asked a noted preacher what he considered the chief

difficulty in religious life today. And this is the reply he received, "A former generation 'surveyed the wondrous Cross on which the Prince of glory died,' and then went out and turned their communities upside down while we today spend endless time 'surveying' our communities, and leave them about as they were before."

Dr. Jones reminds us also that, "Dean Inge not long ago humorously remarked that Jesus said, 'Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in their midst,' but that now where three people assemble one is sure to be made chairman, the second treasurer and the third secretary, and then they proceed to attack their problem in committee fashion."

You see, then, what I mean when I say that service may become a barrier to God. Instead of continuing to lead us on our further way, it may lead us only into a halfway house where we live as a friend to man but forsake our quest for God. An English author states the matter concisely when he says, "He who truly seeks God must learn this lesson: first the Father's arms, then the Father's errands."

III. MORALITY.

How can a man say that morality is a barrier to God? Did not the Master pronounce the pure in heart blessed because they shall see God? Did He not encourage the quest for righteousness? To be sure, He did. No one can contemplate the life and teaching of Jesus and speak disparagingly of the moral ideal.

But I am thinking now of the multitudes whose satisfaction with their own goodness is checking their quest for God. We are frequently asked if it is not enough for a man to be good. In the first place, it is not enough for a man to be good if he can be better. And in the second place, it is perilous to undertake the maintenance of goodness without the help of God.

Paul sincerely tried to keep the commandments and he succeeded to an uncommon degree. But there was a perpetual warfare in his heart. Evil continued to throw him into confusion until he cried, "Wretched man that I am!" It was not until he handed the whole matter over to Christ that he found peace.

There are multitudes in a similar situation. They will tell you, "If I knew what was right, I could do it easily." But all the time they avoid facing Christ squarely. They speak of conventional behavior and insist that their own opinion of proper conduct is as likely to be right as the accepted standards of enlightened mankind. They overlook the fact that their judgment is biased by their desire, and they proceed to defend their irregularities by referring to similar shortcomings in the lives of others. Why should a man who is sincerely trying to live the right kind of life hesitate to dedicate himself completely to Christ who is acclaimed by mankind as the world's supreme character and only Saviour?

Morality is good, but morality which rejects the Lordship of Jesus is an uncertain thing. When a crisis comes, it is apt to collapse because it lacks adequate inspiration and motive power. It persuades one to be content with a mediocre standard which shames the soul at its best. It tends to degenerate for want of a sufficient ideal. And it promotes a self-satisfaction which inter-

rupts the quest for righteousness. Morality which refuses to adjust itself in all honesty to Christ is a barrier to God.

IV. RELIGION.

Intellectualism, service, morality and religion, these are strange things to speak of as barriers to God. But the strangest of all is religion. Let us be careful how we speak about religion in the church, the home and private life. Its contribution to the individual life can never be computed.

Nevertheless, religion becomes a barrier when it is permitted to degenerate into a cold and formal creed and ceremony. There are people whose Christianity amounts to little more than a memory of some stirring and beautiful experience through which they passed a generation ago. They no longer spread spiritual contagion to others because the fire has gone out in their own hearts. We wish sometimes that we could approach the whole Gospel of Jesus with the joyous surprise of those who never heard it before. The real advances in the Christian enterprise have been inspired and directed by those who, like Luther and Wesley, were intensely aware that Christ was dealing directly with them. When a man catches such a spark from heaven, creeds and ceremonies cannot hold him. But when he is satisfied to adjust himself to a mere formality, the vision vanishes, the spirit languishes and God is lost.

Religion becomes a barrier also when it is merely emotional. I need not stress the vital part played by the feelings in religious life. We are right in seeking comfort and peace. But we are not right in permitting our ears to become dull to religion's appeal to adventure.

In his beautiful hymn, Faber says,

> "Far, far away like bells at evening pealing,
> The voice of Jesus sounds o'er land and sea,
> And laden souls by thousands meekly stealing,
> King Shepherd, turn their weary steps to Thee."

This is as true as it is beautiful, but it is not enough. The man who accepts it as enough erects by his neglect a barrier to God.

Leslie D. Weatherhead says, "When the voice of Jesus sounded first it wasn't 'far, far away,' but uncomfortably near and challenging. It wasn't so much like a bell at evening. It was like a trumpet at dawn." The voice of Jesus is like a trumpet at dawn. It calls the soul to the greatest of all adventures, the quest for God.

Again, religion becomes a barrier when it grows too familiar. We have heard the Sermon on the Mount so often that we are not aware of the spiritual dynamite it contains. In more hearts than one suspects, familiarity with certain features of religion has bred contempt for the whole thing. Or if it has not bred contempt, it has put the soul to sleep. In either case, there is no experience to interpret the stupendous event of Calvary, and the God whom Christ reveals remains unknown.

These, then, are among our barriers: *intellectualism* which argues but does not worship; *service* which finds no inspiration beyond this world; *morality*

which omits Christ; and *religion* which is either too formal, too soft or too familiar to make God real. These are halfway houses in which we lodge when we should be on our way to God, but perhaps the supreme barrier to God is the cross which we refuse to accept. We like something else so much that we withhold a full surrender to Christ. His first message was "repent and believe." It is His message now. And we are not likely, if indeed we are able, to believe and know without repentance. Have you the courage to repent, my friend? Do you dare to turn with your whole soul from your own faults and indulgences to Christ the Redeemer? Are you ready to be absolutely sincere with Christ? Then take your cross and go with Him. He will bring you to God.

Seventeenth Sunday After Trinity.

THEME: *The Immovable Center.*

GLENN RANDALL PHILLIPS, D. D.

TEXT: Ephesians 3:20-21.
HYMNS: "Thou art my hiding place, O Lord . . ."—*Shelter, C. M. D.*
"Holy, Holy, Holy! Lord God Almighty . . ."—*Nicea.*

"I was satisfied in God. In Him I had found an immovable center of life." So speaks a present day religious leader about a transforming spiritual experience. An immovable center! One of the disconcerting things about an earthquake is that we feel that the very earth, the foundation beneath our feet, is uncertain. The center is moving. Now Paul had also found a center fixed and abiding. For him it was Jesus Christ. We have his word in Ephesians 3:20, 21, "Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus unto all generations forever and ever. Amen."

There is something fascinating about such a conviction, something imperial about such a proclamation. "No," says Paul, "this Christ whose servant I am is no feudal chieftain, no petty king in a petty kingdom. He is the *center* of God's will and purpose. In Him all things in Heaven and in Earth are gathered up. This universe, life and death, and all between, remain riddles apart from Him. This world with all of its clashing interests can find unity only in Him!"

In Japan they seek unity by exaltation of the emperor. In certain European nations they seek it in emotional response to the sway of a dictator. In imperial Rome it was the person of the Emperor at the center. For Paul it was Christ. Are we claiming too little for Him? Diluting His gospel, abbreviating His person and power? We may live our lives, starting there at the immovable center!

First, because His word is dependable! This fact is attested by history, verified by human experience! "If it were not so, I would have told you." There is the ring of true authority! When He talks about sin He looks within and says it's an attitude even more than an act, and the truth of it stabs me broad awake. When He speaks of forgiveness He joins heaven and earth in the process and makes us feel that our forgiveness of others is of infinite

and immediate concern to Almighty God. When He speaks of happiness, how to reach the isles of blessedness and peace, He gives the Beatitudes and Sermon on the Mount. When He speaks of death it becomes only a sleep, an incident, the grave an inn of a traveller on his way to the Holy City. When He talks of the resurrection He simply says, "I am the resurrection and the life." How should we look to the Bible and how read it? We must not make the Book an object of worship, but the One whom the Book reveals! Not turning like a fortune teller to receive some suggestion, some warning from the chance opening of this sacred library. Not fearful of question or criticism, but open eyed to truth wherever found, then honest, earnest reading and study! His word is dependable. We need not retreat in the face of attacks upon that Word. It has stood the test. We need not be apologetic. We shall never win the world that way! "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto Me," Jesus said. Do you believe it?

Stanley Jones writes, "I met today one of five brothers, minister, teacher, "Y" secretary, college student, physical director of a large college. The father of these five useful, honored citizens was an outcaste of India, lowest of the low. In one generation the father came from that depth to the Moderatorship of a great denomination—and of him one missionary said, 'We could better afford to lose any five missionaries than that one man.' For twenty years he was the honored chairman of the municipality where he had been an outcaste boy. 'He is the only man in that city of India that both Hindus and Mohammedans can trust!" Some humble teacher, preacher, lifting up the Christ, gave Christ a chance to lift this outcaste boy to be in a single generation the intellectual, moral and spiritual peer of any religious leader in India.

Second, His challenge was and is inescapable! It is direct! It is personal! We cannot forever hide behind the faults and failures of others. We cannot always postpone. His cross compels decision. He is always at the center—now on a throne—more often on a cross. The very stars seemed to swing in a new orbit, about a new center where He was born. Simeon said, "This child is set for the falling and rising of many in Israel." He is the rock, at the center. As a lad He was in the midst of the elders in the temple, hearing and answering questions. Of himself, He said, "I am in the midst of you as one that serveth." "Passing through the midst of them He went His way." On Calvary His was the central cross! He quoted for himself, "The stone that the builders rejected has become the head of the corner." At the center from the foundation of the world! At the center forevermore! All things in heaven and earth are summed up in Him. Men may turn from the logic of our theology; they cannot evade the logic of His love! In one of the shrines in Japan the guide said to us, "See this god painted on a screen. Viewed from any angle he always is looking directly at the individual." Jesus Christ is like that! We would lose ourselves in the crowd or hide behind the failures of society, but He follows us—His love will not let us go. "I gave my life for thee; what hast thou given for Me?"

What is this gift of life worth to you? What will you do for it? What will you pay for it? What will you suffer for it? What will you seek to be—because of it? What will you say to Him?

PRAYER

O Divine Love, Thou dost everlastingly stand outside the closed doors of human hearts, knocking ever and again, wilt Thou not now give us grace to throw open all my doors. Let every bar and every bolt be drawn, and every key put aside, so we may have light and air and love.

In contrition and humility we confess our sins and transgressions of hate and lust and selfishness, and we pray for forgiveness and grace for a new beginning. We ask that our shortcomings be wiped away through Thy gracious love and sacrifice. Make us shine forth Thy grace and plans in our own lives and through gifts and helpfulness to our brethren in Christ. Amen.

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

God Our Heavenly Father.

LESSON: Gen. 1:26-28; Ex. 34:4-7; Psa. 103:1-13; Isa. 40:27-31; Matt. 6:24-34; 22:35-38; John 4:24; 14:20-23; Acts 17:24-30; I John 1:1-4. Print Gen. 1:26-28; Matt. 6:24-33.

GOLDEN TEXT: "Our Father who art in heaven, Hallowed by thy name." Matt. 6:9.

DEVOTIONAL READING: Psalm 103:8-14.

INTER. & SR. TOPIC: Our Father in Heaven.

Y. P. & ADULTS: Loving and Honoring our Heavenly Father.

Here we have the great foundation fact that God is the Creator of all things. The entire universe has its origin in God. This is the first great teaching, a fitting preface for the Word of God, the basis of knowledge of religion and of morality.

Make plain to the class just what is meant by a man being created in God's image. It means with will, emotion, volition, and intellect, able to think, to decide, to feel, and to do. It has no reference, of course, to the physical body.

Nearly every race has some account of the creation and origin of man. The Babylonian, Assyrian, Egyptian, Persian, East Indian, Greek, etc., all have their legends.

The Biblical account is laconic and restrained. The legends are degrading in their influence and vulgar. The Biblical account is chaste, refined, and pure. The legends have no particular religious teaching worthy of the name while the entire Biblical account is permeated with the sense of the nearness and the power of God.

The word "create" is used only three times in this chapter. 1. In regard to the origin of matter in verse 1. 2. In regard to the origin of life in verse 21. 3. In regard to the origin of soul in verse 27. It is remarkable that these are exactly the points where nature has said to science, "Thus far and no farther." All the powers of modern science have failed to originate matter of life or soul. After these have come into being, men may go on developing, but they cannot create. Here must come in a God who can create. Professor John Tyndall says, "I affirm that no shred of trustworthy experimental testimony exists to prove that life in our day has ever appeared independent of antecedent life."

But God is much more than the Creator of Man. He is the Father of men.

EVENING SERMON

THEME: ***Comparisons.***

RICHARD K. MORTON.

SCRIPTURE: Eph. 4:1-16.
TEXT: "Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Jesus Christ." Eph. 4:1-16.
HYMNS: "O What if we are Christ's . . ."—*Aberystwyth, S. M.*
"Jesus, Thou joy of loving hearts. . . ."—*Germany, L. M.*

We are always comparing things with other things. The very number of things and immaterial entities impels comparisons.

Comparisons form one means of learning and of spiritual enrichment.

No one knows his true value or the value of anything until a comparison has been made with other people or things.

Children compare their toys and match their skills. Others test themselves by what others can do.

It is my belief that many people remain selfish because they never have been compared with the selfish, and with the unselfish. They can remain conceited, unfair, narrow, touchy, and so on, because they never have compared themselves, showing those qualities, with people who do not show them.

The town bully among school children, terrifying them, is probably a boy who has never met anyone really strong. The most conceited person in a group has never met with a really wise, intelligent, and learned person, so that there has not been revealed to him the true littleness of his wisdom. The narrow sectarian remains so because he has never met anyone who has caught and embodied the spirit of a broader conception of religion.

I went to France, years ago, thinking I knew French thoroughly from college days, but in talking with native French people, I soon saw that I really was not familiar with the language. Some young people in one of my churches graduated from the town high school thinking they were pretty intelligent and learned individuals. It was a severe shock to them to go to college and find there a faculty and student body that knew much more than they.

There are groups of people in our churches who think themselves pretty definitely and beautifully Christian. But when some of them meet missionaries who have repeatedly dared death on foreign fields; when they talk with others who have defied corrupt leaders or labored for years in some neglected social project; and when they meet, at a conference or elsewhere, some truly great and saintly Christian—then they see themselves in a new perspective.

Comparisons are great revealers. We need to know just where we stand and what we have, in relation to other things. At the root of our futility in Christian work, our pride and conceit, and our provincialism is a lack of comparing with others.

Education and religion both try to multiply comparisons which people can make.

Christianity advances a Great Comparison. It is the religion of the Way.

It says to all who will come to it: "Here in a sacred Book is a Way. Follow it unto eternal life. Compare what is in it with what you find elsewhere. Compare its precepts with those elsewhere. Compare the kind of life it promotes with what you find elsewhere." The greatest proof for the Bible is the type of life produced when it is carefully followed.

Christianity has an even greater standard of comparison. It says: "Behold the Lamb of God," in whom dwelt "all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." It says: "Behold the man!" Jesus Christ fully embodied the Father, was a full incarnation of all that God can be among men. Looking at Him, men get their standard of comparison. They then see, as Peter saw, how sinful and weak and unworthy they are, and how much they need God and His salvation and peace and grace. Left to themselves, they might come to think that their scientific and educational progress, and all the rest of it, had made them into splendid beings, scarcely subject to much significant improvement. But they cannot look at Jesus Christ and feel that way. The comparison is intensely revealing.

Following in the line of Christian disciplines, people may feel that they have been doing in all things what a Christian should. But when they see what Jesus did, and what missionaries and a thousand other kinds of workers are doing among the Negroes, the Jews, the unemployed, the sick, the wayward, and the troubled, they see how much they yet lack.

The beginning of real religion for many comes when they really compare themselves with Jesus Christ. They may have a hard time deciding what to think of Him or of doctrines of His Church—but there is no doubt as to the lofty example He has set. That demands some opinion, some reaction, from everyone.

Compare yourselves with Jesus Christ. Strive to attain more unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Jesus Christ.

The task of religion is simple: It is to train up more who will act and think and have the spirit of Jesus Christ. A religion is not perpetuated by churches, creeds, rites, ceremonies, and organizations. It is preserved by a spirit which lives within the individual. The Christian can instantly measure his progress and check his course by Jesus Christ. When he compares himself with Jesus, he sees just where he is.

The trouble is that so many have been striving toward some other goal. They have been measuring by some other standard. They have not been comparing themselves with the highest examples they could find.

Christianity says to one and all, "Here is the height and breadth and depth of God's love and purpose. What is yours?" It says, "Here is the full stature of Jesus Christ, God incarnate, the Son of the Most High. What is your stature?"

MID-WEEK SERMON

THEME: ***The World for Christ.***

TEXT: Matthew 28:19.

Is there any sense in speaking of Christianising the world in times and conditions such as we are actually living in at this moment? If there is not, there is no sense in anything.

The World in Chaos: War! Senseless destruction of property; loss of life and leadership; whether in victory or defeat. Government! Fairly stable until war of 1914. Now overthrow after overthrow. International relations! Might makes right. Treachery everywhere. Hopeless? Macaulay said, "All my days I have seen nothing but progress and heard of nothing but decay."

The Cause of Chaos: Must beware of blind, easy-going optimism. World conditions are chaotic and ruin of everything held essential to best interests of the race is possible. Causes: Personal ambitions of men and lust for power. Movements of population: demands for room for expansion. Industrialism: lost contact with nature. Overcrowding of cities. Poverty; Ignorance; Disease: breeding grounds of unrest and revolution. Godlessness: lies at root of all.

The Return from Chaos: Our Christianity, our churchmanship, made real in all the avenues of life. Strengthen the Church as an agent of God: forget denominationalism, remember only God and his purposes. Strengthen education: we have left religion out of education. Impress growing generation with sense of social, moral responsibility. Develop personal responsibility: we have lost passion for souls. Must realize we are all children of the one God. We can each make our individual contribution: "You in your small corner and I in mine."

TOPICS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE'S SOCIETIES

CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR: Y. P.—A Seven Day Christian. Prov. 21:3. Hosea 6:6. Mark 12:28-34.

Jr.—Worship of One God. Jesus Went to Synagogue. Matt. 13:53-58.

WALTHER LEAGUE: October Topic, Our Associates (Business—None—Christian). Do you agree with the ethics of the firm where you work? Do you associate with non-Christians rather than Christians? Choosing your working conditions, and business standards. Can you influence the standards of the firm in which you work?

FOR THE BULLETIN BOARD

Anything that breaks up on the rock of truth may well be discarded.
When planting in your heart, try roses.
And it is the thorns that have their roses.
Greedy hands are shaped through prejudice.
Compassion, where found, is always about its business.
True religion goes about doing. False religion just goes about.

OCTOBER, SECOND SUNDAY

CALL TO WORSHIP: "We give thanks to God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."
PSALM: 148.
PRELUDE: Scherzo in F—*Guilmant.*
ANTHEM: Gloria—*Mozart.*
OFFERTORY: Melodie—*Tschaikowsky.*
POSTLUDE: Allegro Con Moto—*Shepherd.*
OFFERTORY SENTENCE: "Charge them that are rich in this world's goods that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, ready to communicate."
OFFERTORY PRAYER: Heavenly Father, we know Thy care of us is unceasing, and Thy love unfathomable, and we pray Thee to watch over us so that we forget not our debt to Thy guidance. At times our successes make us arrogant and forgetful, and we become remiss in our obligations to those who need our help. We pray Thee, Gracious Lord, to protect us from such pitfalls. Let us be humble in our own estimation, knowing that our accomplishments are but a reflection of Thy will. Accept our gifts in that spirit, and bless us in Thy service.
BENEDICTION: Take heed to the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfill it. . . . Grace be with you.

SERMONS

THEME: ***The Forgiveness of Sins.***

HUGH THOMSON KERR, D. D.

TEXT: "Sin is lawlessness. And ye know that he was manifested to take away sins; and in him is no sin." I John 3:4-5.
HYMNS: "Weary of earth and laden with my sin. . . ."—*Langran,* 10, 10, 10, 10.
"Approach, my soul, the Mercy Seat. . . ."—*Burford, C. M.*

Everything depends upon our estimate of human nature. We cannot build until we are sure we are building upon the rock of truth. Before we can erect a new social structure, a new economic and spiritual order, a new family life, we must know the quality of the material with which we have to build. Is human nature dependable?

What is the Bible's estimate of human nature? Does it move out on the hypothesis that human nature is good and trustworthy? It has been said that the Bible is in reality a textbook on sin. When we open the Book anywhere we discover men and women with a burden upon their souls. The Bible cannot be understood apart from the fact that human nature is deceptive and untrustworthy and tricky.

How did Jesus look upon men? On the very first page of the first gospel we come upon the words, "Thou shalt call his name JESUS; for he shall save his people from their sins." We find Him facing up to men who sought to deceive Him, who were insincere; and we read that He did not trust Himself to them, for He knew what was in man and needed not that any should testify of man. We come upon Him teaching His disciples to pray and we hear the familiar words, "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors." He explains to the people the mystery of His own mission, "I came to seek and to save that which was lost." At the end of His life, while the heavens are dark and He is dying upon the cross, He prays, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." It is not possible to disentangle His life from this ever potent fact of sin. Men need to be forgiven. They need to

be saved. They need to be redeemed, and there is no purpose in His life or teaching or ministry if this fact is ignored or forgotten. Turn where we may, we will come face to face with man's disappointment with himself, his undependable nature and the fact that where he is needed most and trusted most he fails. We seek to make laws in the interest of righteousness, conscious of the fact that man is drawn downward. The judge on the bench recognizes that the best of men in a crisis may fail. The physician sees human nature slipping and failing behind the disease which he seeks to cure. The social worker understands that behind poverty and destitution the shadow of sin is recognized. The minister meets it everywhere in his work. The banker is conscious of its presence as he handles the securities that pass from hand to hand.

But that is not where we come face to face with the deepest sense of failure and of sin. The sense of estrangement, of struggle, is found at its keenest in the conscience of the saint. It is the experience of the best people that things are not right with them and out of the literature of the saints have come the confessions which have brought us face to face with human nature at its best and its worst. It is this sentiment that finds expression in the hymn, "They who fain would serve Thee best are conscious most of wrong within." In the words of Carlyle, "There is ever a dark spot in our sunshine. It is even, as I said, a shadow of ourselves." St. Paul sets it before us in unforgettable words. He says, "I want to do what is right but I do wrong. I agree to God's law but I find another law which conflicts with that law and makes me a prisoner. I am a slave. I cannot understand my own actions. I do not act as I want to act. In fact I do what I do not want to do." It is because of this inner conflict that he crys out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" The soul has it within its own power to give consent or to withhold it. I could have said No but I said Yes. I could have said Yes but I said No. It is an inner act. It is something spiritual. The flesh and the body and the physical have nothing to do with it. It is the consent of my soul. It is my personal commitment.

It is this conflict which must be resolved. It is a conflict within the soul of every man. He can say Yes or No. Saying No may resolve the conflict and bring some sort of satisfaction. A man who is committed to evil has no compunction of conscience and no conflict of soul. Saying Yes to God resolves the conflict and brings a sense of peace. If the soul continues to say No, then it is committed to an anti-God attitude and in the end there is darkness and death. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." "The wages of sin is death." When the soul says Yes to God, there is a return to the soul's true life. Made in the image of God the human soul is restless till it finds God and only when the prayer is offered, "Not my will, but thine, be done" is there victory. Now this is the achievement of Christ. He came to save people from their sins. He came to give them victory over themselves. He came to break down the middle wall of partition in our own lives and to create a new man, a new creature complete, united, whole. Across the ages we hear him say, "Wilt thou be made whole?" When we throw ourselves upon Him, we become one in Him. We are no longer a dual personality fighting within ourselves, divided, looking this way and that, living a Saturday and Sunday

sort of life; but we become a personality that is at peace with itself, that has achieved victory and that is able to act righteously, to say Yes to God. That is what we mean when we stand up and say, "I believe in the forgiveness of sins."

Let us, however, look at that statement a little closer. What do we really mean when we say, "I believe in the forgiveness of sins"? If it means that the consequences and penalties and punishments of sin are wiped out, then we will demur. That is not true to reality or to experience. The consequences of sin are what they are and will be what they are. The bitter word is spoken and cannot be recalled. The fatal poison is administered and it cannot be removed. The estrangement has taken place. The evil has been done.

"The Moving Finger writes; and, having writ,
Moves on: nor all your Piety nor Wit
Shall lure it back to cancel half a Line,
Nor all your Tears wash out a Word of it."

The promise is that God will restore the years that the locusts have eaten, that He will repair the desolation of former generations. But the legacy and penalty of evil remain and the debts that have accumulated must at last be paid.

But forgiveness is something vaster, more wonderful, more amazing than that. Forgiveness has reference not to acts merely but to attitudes, not to particular deeds so much as to permanent relationships. True forgiveness speaks of renewed trust. It involves restoration to friendship. It brings about reconciliation. It restores confidence. It takes away all sense of estrangement and establishes a new relationship upon the rock foundation of trust and confidence. You see it in your dealing with your children. Forgiveness means the renewed kiss of affection, the restoration to favor even though there may be punishment and penalty required. This is what forgiveness in God means. It is God's new trust in the soul. It is God's new faith expressed in His willingness to trust us. God trusts us anew. He believes in us. He hopes for us. He puts responsibility again upon us. It is forgiveness which Jesus extended to Peter when He said, "Simon, Simon, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted—then I have something for you to do for me. You must come back into the apostolic circle and minister to thy brethren." It is forgiveness we hear spoken in the glad experience of Isaiah, where we find him in the presence of burning holiness crying out, "I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips." Then we read that the angel, touching his lips with the burning fire, said, "Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin forgiven." Then we find restoration and renewal of trust, and in answer to the challenge "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" the prophet redeemed from sin responds, "Here am I; send me." It is Jesus saying to the penitent prodigal, who had come home with the confession upon his lips "Father, I have sinned against Heaven," "Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him." And the house is relighted, the music is heard again and the joy of complete understanding and fellowship has been

restored. When others have lost faith in us, when we have lost faith in ourselves, God trusts us. He bids us stand upon our feet and look the world in the face and in that forgiveness we find new hope, new confidence, new life even though there be memories that bless and burn.

There is a vast difference between the fear of consequences that follows sin and the friendship of reconciliation. How is this done? Well that is the Gospel. It is done by God giving Himself to us. How greatly He gives Himself to us in Christ, in His life, in His cross and in His living presence! "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end." It is the love of God that redeems, that awakens within us new desires, new hopes, new aspirations and a new response to holiness. In Owen Wister's book *The Virginian* the uncultured cowboy who had been lifted up by human love said, "It was neither preaching nor praying that made a better man of me, but one or two people who believed in me better than I deserved and I hated to disappoint them." Well, that is the story of God's trust in us. The eternal God thinks better of us than we deserve, and we are pledged not to disappoint Him. How do we know that? We know that when we stand in the presence of Jesus who gave Himself for us and for our salvation. We know it when we stand beside His cross, from which He speaks forgiveness. He refuses the penalty. He shuts the door on enmity and opens the door to reconciliation, to the renewal of trust, and to a new confidence in ourselves and in God's eternal love. Down through the ages comes to us the victory song of forgiveness and reconciliation, the song in which we join:

"If I ask Him to receive me,
Will He say me nay?
'Not till earth and not till heaven
Pass away.'

"Finding, following, keeping, struggling,
Is He sure to bless?
'Saints, apostles, prophets, martyrs,
Answer, Yes.'"

Eighteenth Sunday After Trinity.

THEME: ***Man's Great Capacity for God.***

W. J. McCULLOUGH.

TEXTS: Genesis 2:7. Matthew 22:37.
HYMNS: "O Worship the King. . . ."—*Lyons,* 10, 10, 11, 11.
"Shine Thou upon us, Lord . . ."—*The Blessed Home,* 66, 66, *D.*

We were in Pocatello, Idaho, when we heard that the famous Sun Dance Rite of the Bannock and Shoshone Indian Tribes was being celebrated at the Fort Hall Indian Reservation about five miles away. The next morning we were there. According to the newspaper, white people had never witnessed the Sun Dance previous to this year; but the Indians, caught in this thing called a depression, were now ready to collect twenty-five cents from anyone who wished to see the dance.

Far off the main road we came to the "dance hall." It was constructed of cottonwood poles that formed a wigwam circle about twenty feet in

diameter. An eight-foot opening formed the door. These poles came together at a large straight pole that rose from the center of the enclosure. A few branches were laid over the poles to keep out a little of the sun's intense rays.

Outside the structure were about two hundred spectators mostly Indians, of various tribes. Many of them were women and children. Inside the "wigwam" were a hundred men of the Bannock and Shoshone tribes participating in a three-day sun dance. They had begun Saturday night at sunset and would continue until Tuesday at sunrise. Their bodies were clothed in loin cloth or blanket draped about the hips. No dancer could leave the enclosure during the three days, although he took short rest periods of a few minutes by dropping out of a dance by schedule. Time is kept by the dancers, who blow short, shrill blasts on their flutes as they drag their bare feet through the blistering hot, deep dust. They approach the pole in the center and back up again to the starting point. No women are in the dance, but chanters and women accompany the rhythmic sway of the dancers with monotonous beating of tom toms. The prayers are led and directions given by two of the venerables of the tribes. One day of rest follows the completion of the ceremony and then a day of feasting for the dancers. For remember, they do not taste bread nor water during the three days.

What is the meaning of such an ordeal? These Indians were dead in earnest. Even the spectators were in earnest. No man will abstain from food, water, and sleep for three days and nights, and dance continuously, in such July heat as Idaho can boast of, unless there is a very serious reason.

Those Indians believe that participation in the Sun Dance, either in person or by proxy, will cure their ailments. It was evident that some of the dancers were seeking personal relief, others were doubtless dancing for sick relatives or friends. Lest some of you might say, what superstitious fools those Indians are, let me tell you that in my mind there is nothing foolish about it. It is just as reasonable as much of our faith healing. There is superstition in it, but there is also superstition still clinging to many of our "Christian" practices.

The Sun Dance is a prayer to "The Great Father" for health. The son of the Bannock Tribal chief, acting as interpreter for his father, explained the meaning of the dance. "Long before the white men emigrated to the American continent bringing with them the story of Christ and the Christian Bible, the Bannock Indians portrayed the story of Christ or "The Great Father" on the Cross. They even described the crown of thorns that "The Great Father" wore "by painting a band of green about every Indian Dancer's head."

"Before white men came we build sun dance circle placing twelve poles above the enclosure as spokes in a wagon wheel, meaning The Great Father sent out twelve disciples in all directions to give the world the story of his suffering and sacrifice. The center pole which stands toward the sun with the buffalo head at the top is just as 'The Great Father' stood when he died. Indians have known it to be true long before white men came.

"When the white men came they told us the story of Christ and we told them the story of The Great Father and we found the stories were alike.

Our dancers fast for three days and The Little Old Man as we call him gives prayer at sunrise to The Great Father, who gave us the cottonwood trees with which to build our circle and the ground to dance upon. The white man's Christ, the Indian learned, lay three days in the tomb before he ascended," chief Ballard continued.

"Our ceremony included certain torture forms before the United States government intruded. The torture was the same as our Great Father suffered before he died. And too, the Indian dancers used to dance naked just as the Great Father appeared on the cross, so you see there is not so much difference between the story of our Great Father and the story of the white man's Christ, which we learned many years after our tribes adopted this ceremonial custom."

Chief Ballard then explained, through his son, Vidal, that the reason why the white people have never understood the Sun Dance was twofold. First, old tribal members could not explain it at length by interpreting it, and then also they did not know the white man's Bible nor the story of the Christ to draw the simile.

I cannot explain the reason for the likeness of the two stories. It seems very certain to me, however, that sometime, somewhere, their ancestors heard the Christian story. It may possibly have been from French or Spanish missionaries (but they say they had the story before the White man came). It may have been longer ago before their ancestors had left Asia to cross the Bering Sea to Alaska, and thence to other parts of the North American continent.

But, whatever the origin, the Sun Dance of the Bannock Indians, like the Snake Dance of the Hopis, reveals man's capacity for God. Man *is* religious and not because he wants to be, but because it is natural for him to be.

At Mesa Verde in Colorado are the best preserved Cliff Dwellings. "Cliff Palace," or Cliff City, as the largest single cliff is called, was the home of three hundred. There is a Kiva or Church for each family of the Cliff. The Cliff Dwellers, as the present-day Indians, were a religious people.

The Basket Makers, some of whom lived at Mesa Verde before the day of the Cliff Dwellers, were definitely a religious people. Basket Makers' graves have been found, and in the Museums at Mesa Verde, Salt Lake City, and other places are utensils and foods taken from the graves, with the bodies of those ancient Americans. They were religious and had deep faith in immortality, as the articles and foods indicate.

If we were to trace the history of religion we would discover that religion is not peculiar to any one land or people. When science first locates man for us—the Neanderthal Man who lived from about 50,000 to 25,000 B.C., or perhaps even 100,000 B.C.—man is a worshipping being. In graves with their bodies are the clear indications of burnt sacrifices that infer not only religion but a belief in life after death. In the caves of the later Cro-Magnon man are paintings which apparently formed a part of his primitive faith. Then there developed the giant tombs and monuments of colossal stones of which the Dolmens of France and England and the Pyramids of Egypt are two examples. Twenty thousand slaves worked twenty years

to build the largest, the Pyramid of Cheops. Some 5,700 years ago that tomb was built. Connected with that, as with all the pyramids, is a temple in which sacrifices were made for the spiritual counterpart of the dead. Man himself could live in rude huts, but his dead must be buried in great tombs amidst ritual and sacrifice, for man has a capacity for God and a natural faith in immortality.

In the Cairo Museum are six great rooms devoted to articles taken from the tomb of an Egyptian King. From the chambers of his tomb had come a great wardrobe of sandals, linen, necklaces, beds, coaches, glassware, earrings, chariots, trunks, chairs, footstools, and innumerable other things. In one other room, where William Jennings Bryan is said to have caught his inspiration for his immortal "Ode on Immortality," are grains, bread, cake, cookies, honey and fruit that had lain in graves for 3,500 years.

Man is by creation a religious being. The best definition of the soul that I know is this: "The soul is man's great capacity for God." Religion is not rooted in fear. Religion is not the creation of the superstitious heathen, who being unable to explain the phenomena of nature, worships the objects of nature. Civilization and education will never explain away religion. Man is made for God!

The only possible way to become non-religious is to destroy the soul, to shrivel up that great capacity for God by leaving God out. The only possible way to keep the soul is to keep God in the great capacity that He made for Himself.

I do not fear that the American people will educate themselves away from God, but I do fear that this civilization will, as other civilizations have, influence men to neglect religion until that capacity for God, the soul, has died from non-use. Then, this civilization will go the way other civilizations have gone. Our civilization is built upon our religion. When our religion goes, the bottom will have dropped out. Indians and other "uncivilized" people "work" at their religion. There are hundreds of people in every city, who are destroying their souls, not by wickedness and crime, but simply by neglecting the Sabbath Day to keep it holy, the Family Altar and the Quiet Hour. "The secret of religion is religion in secret."

PRAYER

Our Heavenly Father, we bow before Thee in humility and gratitude for the privilege Thou hast grounded in our hearts to come near to Thee. We gladly own our continuous and unbroken need of Thee, not alone in our hours of quiet, but in every task and every walk in life. We need Thee in the morning, at noon, and at night. We place our well-being into Thy hands, because we know Thou dost love us more than we can comprehend.

Give us grace to understand the extent of our sins and selfishness, give us courage to own up to our wrongs, give us true contrition, so that we may start anew, as children walking in Thy grace and sympathy.

Guide Thou our every act, our every desire, our aims and purposes; fill our hearts with love for our fellowmen, teach us to honor them as knowing they stem from Thee. We ask in Jesus' Name. Amen.

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

Christ Our Saviour.

LESSON: Matt. 1:21; 20:25-28; Luke 19:1-10; John 3:16; 6:66-69; Acts 4:12; Romans 3:21-26; 8:31-39; II Cor. 5:14-21; Phil. 2:5-11; I Tim. 1:15. Print Matt. 20:25-28; Luke 19:1-10.

GOLDEN TEXT: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have eternal life." John 3:16.

DEVOTIONAL READING: Isaiah 53:1-6.

INTER. & SR. TOPIC: Christ Our Saviour.

Y. P. & ADULTS: Christ Our Saviour.

The words of Jesus found in Matthew 20:25-28 must have been spoken with some degree of sadness. James and John had just manifest a very unworthy spirit. Jesus did not rebuke them, however. Rather, He led them and the other disciples out from their pettiness into His large thought for life and Eternity. So rich are the lessons which Jesus draws from this incident that we can almost thank God that the ten were angry.

The rulers of the Gentiles to which reference is made refers to all who are not Jews. The original source of earthly dominion is almost always the strong hand. One man wielded a sharper sword or a heavier club than his rivals and as a consequence exercised authority over them. They became "great" in the sense of grandees and magnates, not great in moral character.

Then Christ proceeds to lay down, not the rule of greatness as it has sometimes been called, but rather the antidote for the lust for greatness, when He says, "Whosoever would become great among you shall be your minister." Here He substitutes the greatness of love for the love of greatness and to those who are eager for power He preaches the might of service. This greatness is not won at the expense of others but rather in the service of others. Furthermore, it may be achieved anywhere and it is satisfying after it is won. Nowhere did Christ reject the idea of differences of rank and of degrees of greatness in the Kingdom of Heaven. Nor does He overlook the fact that men here are equipped with differing endowments and abilities. He insists, however, always that those who are greatly endowed must serve greatly and that every man must render his contribution according to the abilities which are his. The true success is the success which Christ taught of helping others as we climb, not using them for stepping stones but drawing them up with sympathetic, tender hands, even as He Himself also drew us up.

One of the most fascinating things about our Lord is that He is always looking in the most unlikely places for virtue. He looked to Peter for stability, to the covetous Zaccheus for generosity, to the impure Magdalene for purity, to the boisterous John for tenderness and sweetness, and He was not disappointed when He so looked. In verse 10 the Lord outlines His mission. Jesus is *the* Son of Man, foretold in the prophecy of Daniel, the second Adam in whom men are made alive. He came to give His life a ransom for many. The word "ransom" implies that we are slaves of sin but that Christ redeems us from our slavery.

EVENING SERMON

THEME: ***The Keystone Commandment.***

RALPH W. SOCKMAN, D. D.

Let us think of the Ten Commandments as forming an arch. We have on one side the commandments safeguarding the rights of God, and on the other, those safeguarding the rights of man. And the transition one at the top is the fourth, "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy." It is the keystone which holds both sides of the arch.

It is only when we consciously draw near to God that we become conscious of his nearness to us. It is only when we stop and pay attention to him that we fall in love with him. As he says through the lips of the Psalmist, "Be still and know that I am God." And this is what the Sabbath Day does for us. It sets us looking for God. It is designed to create a holy hush wherein we can hear the voice of the highest. Hence if we take away the Sabbath, the first of the Ten Commandments begins to slip.

How about the second, that of making no graven images? We think we are a long way from the primitive days of idolatry, but are we? No, the forms of idolatry have changed, but the fact of it remains. When we lose our grip on the sovereign God, we take up with some lesser gods. When the boys came back to Germany after the war, as Erick Remarque told in his book, "All Quiet On The Western Front," they had lost their faith in God, but they did not long remain godless. They tried several gods and then they erected a most forbidding one over there, namely, the totalitarian state. Oh, yes, men get their gods, however irreligious they may call themselves. The lesser gods, like the ancient graven images, are the kind men can carry around with themselves, because they are the mere projections of their own wishful thinking. When we cease to dwell in the secret place of the Most High, we no longer abide under the shadow of the Almighty, but descend to man-made divinities which now bedevil us. Hence, we need a weekly day of worship to resist the gravity of our natures toward lower gods.

The prohibition against taking the name of God in vain involves something more than mere profane speech. It has to do with that deeper thing called reverence. Reverence is that subtle quality which refines life, which holds in leash our crude passions, which puts the "no trespassing" sign on certain sacred spots of natures. Take out of life the factors which make for reverence and all things soon become cheap.

The Dutch have a very descriptive word for the Sabbath. They call it God's Dyke. And to the people of Holland, dykes are veritable life-savers. So Sunday is the divine dyke set up to keep the sea of worldliness from engulfing us. On the low level of our daily living it does not take very long for worldliness and secularism to submerge us. We retreat from one sanctity to another, and after awhile the landmark of decency and divinity are gone.

Anything, therefore, which can keep alive the spirit of reverence is of essential value to our time. And one thing designed to do this is the institution of the Sabbath. Without further argument, I maintain that the fourth commandment is the keystone which holds in place the first three, those which deal with man's relations to God.

Let us now turn to the other side of the Decalogue arch, to the commandments which deal with the rights of man. About a hundred and fifty years ago France, in her memorable revolution, attempted to set up a social regime to guarantee the rights of liberty, equality and fraternity. But she tried to raise those ideals on a thin, humanistic soil. They called it the Age of Reason. They left God out of the program. And what happened? During the fourteen months that the Christian Sabbath was prohibited, there were 20,000 divorces—more than in any previous five-year period in France. Moreover, the rights of property and life were lost, a Reign of Terror ensued, and out of the chaos came eventually the dictatorship of Napoleon. But at about the same time, on this side of the Atlantic, a revolution took place with the same ideals as those in France, but on a soil cultivated by the Puritans of New England, the Quakers of Pennsylvania, the Hugenots of the Carolinas, the Catholics of Maryland. And on a soil thus religiously cultivated, the American revolution resulted in a Washington, a Constitution, and a democracy.

Was Voltaire right when he said that if you wish to root out the Christian religion, just stop observing the Sabbath? It is the Sabbath which gives time for those brooding insights which nourish the roots of religion. It is the day on which we are led beside the still waters and restore our souls.

"The Sabbath," said our Lord, "is made for man." It is in the Decalogue because it is designed for man's welfare. For one thing, the Sabbath is the day on which a man re-collects himself. Secular living tends to scatter our energies. Our strength is dissipated. We become immersed in details, a state toward which we easily deteriorate. To correct this we need to "see life steadily and see it whole." We are like the weavers in Syria that one sees working on the patterns of carpets, pulling the many threads. But every so often they go around in front of the loom and look at the patterns. So with us. Six days a week we pull the threads, then on the seventh we walk around in front of the loom to see whether our work resembles the pattern shown us in the Mount of Sinai and in the Mount of Olives. Having viewed the pattern, we cut some threads, we draw others more tightly and renew our vision of the whole.

The Sabbath is the day when we re-appraise as well as re-collect ourselves. We do our daily work in the atmosphere of the market place. We live in a land where everything appears to be for sale. We desperately need some respite from the shadow of the market-place. Such a deliverance is what the Sabbath should do for us. When on the Sabbath we give some time to taking a divine inventory of ourselves, we re-appraise what men do not seem to value in us. We rediscover what we are worth to God, whose sons we are. And we take stock of what in ourselves is not for sale. And be it remembered, there are some things we cannot sell if we are to keep our souls.

Are we so spending the Lord's Day that the rights of God and the rights of man are reinforced? Are we using the day to re-appraise, to re-collect and to re-possess ourselves? The specific methods by which we can make the day serve these ends we leave to the conscience of each. But this we will say, that each one should set up some rules of Sabbath observance for himself, and furthermore society should enforce the laws which safeguard its

preservation, lest the Keystone be loosened and the other commandments fall with it.

De Tocqueville, a distinguished Frenchman, just about a century ago visited America on a mission of investigation. One weekend was spent in the lovely Finger Lake section of New York State. On Saturday night, he saw the busy rush. Then on Sunday morning he felt the hush, and he said to his host, "Is somebody dead?" "No," he was told, "this is the Sabbath." Some years after, De Tocqueville wrote these words: "America is great and strong because the spirit of the Pilgrim Fathers has so permeated the people that as a whole they take one day in seven to stop, reflect and worship." This old commandment is a timely topic in this troubled day.

PRAYER

Great God and Father of mankind, forgive our forgetfulness and ingratitude. We have received and rendered no thanks. We have been forgiven, and softened not our own hearts. On this, thy day, make us to remember the things that are true and honest and just and pure and lovely and of good report. Blind not our eyes to the things that are bad, but help us to overcome evil with good.

And unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, unto Him be glory and honor, world without end. Amen.

MID-WEEK SERMON

THEME: ***Lives Interlaced.***

TEXT: Acts 9:10, 11.

Three names in disrepute: Ananias; Judas; Saul. The three in text are different men. Ananias, a brother; Judas, a kindly, hospitable man; Saul, a new believer in Christ, a new creation.

Lives Interlaced: Interlacing of human lives. One destined to become greatest name in Christian history. We remember him and forget the other two. But the two had their part in making the third possible. Consider possible different situation: Who in Damascus wanted Saul? Jews were through with him. Christians afraid of him. Only some hovel, perhaps, open to him. Suppose Ananias had held to first reaction and refused to go to him. Did the Lord know what he was doing? Many Christians today act as if he did not. Saul might have been condemned to blind uselessness. But two men, of whom we know practically nothing, mingled their lives with his, and gave the Church the Apostle Paul. Stephen. Barnabas. Only one becomes prominent, but that does not minimize importance of others.

Potential Importance of Every Life: Consider influence: our lives flowing into other lives. Interpenetration of personality, interlacing of lives. Sometimes we think applies only to important personages. "If I am of no influence." Every important life will be found to have a number of other lives interlaced. Ananias had to enquire for Judas. Lincoln: Nancy Hanks, Stepmother, Ann Rutledge, Mary Todd, Billie Herndon.

The Strands of the Network: Influence can be for good or for evil. Qualities for good: Reverence—voice of Ananias was the voice of Christ. Kindliness—"Brother Saul!"; wrought a miracle. Service—"Receive thy sight"; an agent of Christ. Saul became a part of the Christian community. He had been contributed to, and now he begins to contribute. There is a vast network of human lives interwoven for the good of the community.

TOPICS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE'S SOCIETIES

CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR: Y. P.—Our Community. Other Churches. Rom. 12:4-13. Jr.—Jewish Customs Today. Ex. 12:1-17.

WALTHER LEAGUE: October Topic, Our Associates. Ethics in Business. 7th and 8th Commandments in relation to business. List known illicit business practices. Why can these continue? What is our responsibility? Is honesty in business the best policy?

FOR THE BULLETIN BOARD

Follow the upward road today. It will lessen the grade tomorrow.
Can your will be wiser than His?
Prayer is preparation. "Be prepared," was never a wiser dictum.
Forget the idea of religion being a creed. It is a life.
Be not misled. Religion is a most practical way of life.
No one merits your devotion more than He.
Where there is devotion there will be devotions.
Grant us, O God, the power to see.

OCTOBER, THIRD SUNDAY

CALL TO WORSHIP: "Every word of God is tried: He is a shield unto them that take refuge in Him."
PSALM: 111.
PRELUDE: Prelude—*Merkel.*
ANTHEM: Tarry With Me—*Neidlinger.*
OFFERTORY: Echo—*Yon.*
POSTLUDE: Festal Postlude—*Rockwell.*
OFFERTORY SENTENCE: "Say not unto thy neighbour, Go and come again, and tomorrow I will give: when thou hast it by thee."
OFFERTORY PRAYER: Thou hast taught us to mete out to others as we would receive, and we bring our offerings in gladness of heart, knowing that Thy work will call forth such gifts as are needed. Make use of our plenty, so that others may come to Thee in grace and love.
BENEDICTION: Peace be to the brethren and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace be with all of them that love our Lord Jesus Christ.

SERMONS

THEME: *In a Time Like This.*

HARRY W. STAVER, D. D.

TEXTS: John 14:6. Luke 9:48. Eph. 8:8.
HYMNS: "Take my life, and let it be. . . ."—*Patmos,* 77, 77.
"We give Thee but Thine own. . . ."—*St. George, S. M.*

Nothing is more detrimental and devastating to creative happiness than the persuasion that one's life is of no significance or consequence. And nothing is more vitalizing and inspiring than the conviction that one's life has meaning, direction and purpose.

Beyond any question there are many today who have concluded or are on the verge of concluding that they have neither the means nor position nor ability nor power to do anything that really matters. They lift the lament saying, "I'd give anything if I could feel my life made any difference in a time like this." But the desire is swallowed up by the dilemma which takes the shape of an overwhelming sense of helplessness and impotence. That desire, with its accompanying dilemma, constitutes for many earnest-minded persons what is, probably, the most unhappy and tragic aspect of their experience. How has it come about that, in our time, we find so great a number tormented, afflicted and frustrated by the feeling that life is "like the chaff which the wind driveth away?" The full answer to that is, obviously, a longer story than can be told here. This much, however, is plain: it is partly an affair of outer conditions and partly an affair of inner attitudes.

The words of the prophet, Isaiah, rather accurately describe the outer aspects of our day. "It is a day of discomfiture and of treading down and of perplexity; a breaking down of the walls and a crying to the mountains." In some very pertinent sense ours is such a time as Victor Hugo relates in the place where he says, "Events dictate; men only sign." In a word, present day conditions are in such a state and present day philosophy and procedures are of such a nature that the individual is submerged and swallowed up and left stranded, as it were, of all significance as an individual. Outer conditions,

being what they are, leaves one with the feeling that his little life does not greatly matter in the total of things.

But the whole answer is not in the outer conditions. Part of it, at least, is in our own inner attitudes. Too many of us, in the turmoil and rank confusion of the times, never "glanced behind to see if we had kept the primal light from wane." We just drifted along in the swift current of things and now find ourselves beyond our depth. We have not guarded and kept intact those moral and spiritual elements which alone make and keep life significant. If life is become insignificant, or seems so to us, we had better reckon with the fact that some considerable portion of the blame rests no elsewhere than upon ourselves.

There is another angle to this matter of inner attitude. When we hear people lamenting, "If only my life mattered," we know fairly well what they are thinking. They have in mind something big, spectacular, world-wide, like stopping a war and bringing peace to all the earth; like solving the unemployment problem and giving every man a job; like healing the economic and social ills that plague us. Almost invariably, in the back of the mind of the person who complains that his life makes no difference is the notion that significance lies only in the doing of some so-called "big" thing. The ordinary, common-place devotions, the everyday loyalty to duty, the routines of obedience to the highest we know and the best we can do—these are counted of no consequence. The hard fact of the matter is that if significance lies in only the "big" things then life, for the bulk of us, never can amount to much for the bulk of us never will have the ability nor the opportunity to be a star of the first magnitude. To rid the mind of the false idea that life's significance is utterly an affair of "big" things is the first step toward the truth that sets us free.

Mary Sinton Leitch has some lines labelled "Failure," in which is illustrated the mind to be rid of and the mind that must supplant it. These are the poet's words.

"I strove, O Lord, to grasp a star for thee,
And, falling, clutched the dust. 'That bit of earth
Upon your palm is of starry worth,'
I heard thee say: 'Give that instead to me!'

"I thought in knightly quest or holy wars
To win thee treasure. Bowed on a broken sword
I cried, 'My hands are empty.' Thou, O Lord,
Didst answer, 'Nay, you bring a gift of scars.'

"Lord, I have sought thy face in vain, and now
I weary. Ah, where art thou? Hark! I hear
Thy voice: 'You sought me, therefore I will wear
Your darkness as a light about my brow.'"

We think it must be a "star," some "knightly quest," some "holy war," some "big" thing and we will not believe that the soil of our striving has a "starry worth," that the "scars" of our struggle are of any value.

So, likewise, does Emily Dickinson point out the same emphasis but in other words saying:

"If I can stop one heart from breaking
I shall not live in vain.
If I can ease one life the aching,
Or cool one pain,
Or help one fainting robin
Into his nest again,
I shall not live in vain."

This is the thing we are trying to say, that it doesn't require the doing of what we call the "big" things to give life meaning and worthwhileness. The thousands of little things, the many deeds that are always within the reach of our ability to perform, these things—so they be done in a spirit of kindness and love—can and will and do save us from the forlorn feeling embodied in the cry: "If only my life made a difference in a time like this."

For all that the poets reveal, the best place to look for the mind, the spirit, and the things that make a "difference" is in the life of Him who was "meek and lowly in heart" and yet lived the most significant life earth has seen or known. If we cannot find in Jesus what things, what mind, what spirit makes life really significant, we shall not find them anywhere. But when we turn to the records of His life we discover, amongst other things, three distinct and definite facts. First, that life has no real significance apart from God. Second, that life has no real significance apart from a purpose. Third, that life has no real significance apart from the laying down of life.

Any way we read the life of Jesus, we find God at the center. We do not need to argue nor elaborate on that fact. All one needs to do to verify it is to read the Gospels through. And this is the thing we learn from him, that "without God life is senseless, love is futile, labor is mad." So, also, do we find purpose at the center of Jesus' life. From that hour in the temple, at the age of twelve, when he said. "I must be about my Father's business" to that hour on the cross of Calvary, at the age of thirty-three, when he said: "Father, into thy hands I commit my spirit," the thing that gives His life significance is the purpose that dominates and directs it. And this is the thing we learn from Him, that when life is conceived and lived in terms of a divine purpose it cannot ever be insignificant. And then, in the life of Jesus, we find a laying down of life. He did that literally on the Cross, in his own case. In our case it may mean the giving of life in sacrificial service of some sort. Incomparably, the most worthless and insignificant life possible and the most completely unhappy, is the life of the one who seeks to live for *self* alone. Only in self-surrender are the supreme satisfactions achieved. Only in the "losing" of life, as the Master said, may life be "found."

The Voice that spoke to Moses out of the burning bush spoke to him saying, "The place whereon thou standest is holy ground."

Life may be significant wherever one is. We do not need special apparatus or environment to make life count. We do not need brilliant and unique talents to triumph. To put God at the center, to let Christ dwell in our hearts by faith, to see life in terms of a purpose, to cease living for self alone, to share life with our fellow-men, these are what someone calls "the elements of experience and conviction which, when lacking, do most to frustrate life and which, when vitally and radiantly present, do most to redeem

life from fear of failure and futility and to lift it into the unity and harmony of the spiritually happy and successful."

Nineteenth Sunday After Trinity.

THEME: *And Jesus Had Not Come.*

PAUL G. KRUTZKY, D. D.

TEXT: "And it was now dark, and Jesus was not come unto them." John 6:17.
HYMNS: "I heard the voice of Jesus say. . . ."—*Vox Dilecti, C. M. D.*
"Thou art the Way; to Thee alone . . ."—*St. James, C. M.*

It is one of the peculiarities of John that when he relates an incident, he usually puts in a remark which illuminates it, as in the instance here mentioned.

Our text follows immediately upon the feeding of the five thousand. The people would have made Him King, but He sends them away. He likewise urges His disciples to enter a boat, while He Himself retires to pray.

His withdrawal indicates that it is always dark when He leaves us, and although we may toil and labor, rest comes only when He appears. In order, however, that we may understand this incident better, we must compare the accounts in the other gospels. Luke omits it entirely. Matthew has a more complete account embodying the story of Peter coming to Jesus on the water. Mark's account is more like that of John's. The reason why John mentions this incident here is because Jesus would have His disciples believe, that His discourse about His body was not to be understood in a gross material sense, but in a spiritual and supernatural sense. When He had spoken of eating His flesh, they had complained of His hard saying, but after this incident they worshipped Him saying: "of a truth, thou art the Son of God."

The disciples were not expecting Jesus to walk on the sea to them, for they had intended to meet Him at a certain place; but were prevented from reaching the shore because of the waves and a contrary wind. The ship was headed for Capernaum. Suddenly the disciples see Jesus coming towards them on the water, and they are afraid. Jesus calls to them: "It is I, be not afraid." Our text is rich in suggestion. It especially suggests to us that it is always dark when Jesus the Light of the world is absent.

It is dark for the sinner to whom Jesus has not yet come. There is a great difference between a Christian like Timothy, who knew the Scriptures from his youth, and one who has lived in sin and come to Jesus after great heart-searching and repentence. The Christian who has been in constant communion with Christ does not know anything of the travail and anxiety of the sinner who finds Jesus. Paul tells us that when a man is converted to Christ, old things pass away, all things become new. Not only, is there anxiety, remorse and sorrow, but there is also joy in the sinner's heart when Jesus comes into it. We are much more inclined to remember the miracles which occur in nature, and yet there are miracles in the human heart far greater than any natural miracles. When a sinner is converted to Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit he becomes a new creature. The conscience which has been asleep awakens, and when he comes to himself, he knows that he has, because of sin, come under the condemnation of the law and

that his sin deserves punishment. In his unconverted state he knows that he is lost and all within him is dark. But when he has found Jesus and been found of Him how different is his outlook on life! His life of sin is no more attractive to him, and the pleasures of sin fill his soul with disgust. Remorse nags at his heart. Over him the sentence of death was hanging and before him there was no hope. Wherever he turned it was dark, and the question that perplexed him was: "whither shall I flee from the wrath to come?"

There is nothing which reveals the power of God more clearly than a glimpse into the sinner's heart. When Jesus is absent all is dark. Light comes only when the light of the Cross of Jesus shines in upon him.

It is not only dark for the sinner when Jesus is absent, but also for the discouraged Christian it is often dark when Jesus is away. Every Christian must at times endure doubt and disappointment.

It seems almost a contradiction to speak of a discouraged Christian, but in doing so we speak not of that which the Christian should be but of that which he often is. If the Christian would be what he should be he would be always rejoicing. However, it is a great error to think that because we do not always rejoice, as Paul bids us, that we are no longer children of God.

There are some people who believe that certainty of faith and joy in Christ do not belong to the nature of the religion of Christ, and think it is presumption to glory in the certainty of salvation. Hence they never try to arrive at a certainty of faith. Others, however, say that certainty of salvation is the very nature and essence of the Christian faith, and claim that where there is no certainty there is no Christian faith. But the truth lies in the middle of these two extremes. Glad certainty is a privilege which we have as children of God, and to become certain of salvation is a duty which every Christian should seek to fulfill. The joy of believing, however, is often lost resulting in discouragement and darkness. When, for instance, we read the Psalms, how dark are the hearts revealed to us. The cries that come to us from those who wrote the Psalms are not the cries of the godless but of those who trust in God and hope in His mercy. Every discouraged Christian should seek to bring his will into harmony with that of God. It is when we do this that Jesus comes to us. And when we obey His word and trust in His promises we shall find again the joy of trust. But we must trust Him not only as our Saviour, but also seek Him while He may be found.

It is often dark for those who suffer for righteousness sake. The Christian knows that he must, through much tribulation, enter the kingdom of God. Every life has its lights and shadows. We all like Paul have our own peculiar thorn in the flesh. Sometimes it is poverty, sickness and persecution which we have to endure. Often it is dark in the lives of God's saints when trials and troubles come which are undeserved and unmerited. And yet we come to see the blessings in trouble and find the silver lining in the dark cloud of affliction. We, as the followers of Christ, must carry the cross; for the cross is not merely a means of correction, but a means of education and a blessing in disguise. Although there are many troubles and trials in this life, Jesus can and does help us, for He comes to us through the waters of trouble, and He alone can still the storms of passion. When Jesus therefore comes let us

not go farther, but bid Him come into our ship, for where He is there is no darkness, but light and life and salvation.

Christ is the hope of the sorrowing in the dark hour of death which enters our homes and brings darkness and grief with it. The sisters of Bethany complained to Jesus: "hadst thou been here our brother would not have died." It was dark for Mary and Martha because Jesus had not come to them. This same sorrow comes to all of us, for when our loved ones leave us the light of our lives seems to go out. As long as we sorrow without hope for them, darkness is around us. But how different when Jesus comes! As at Bethany when He comes He brings light and life. He turns the darkness of our grief into the light of hope, and in the darkness of our sorrow He brings the light of comfort and consolation.

But He is able to turn our sorrow into joy, and give us beauty for ashes. For those who mourn Jesus alone brings true comfort. Even when there seems to be no hope, He brings hope and cheer into our lives. For we know that those who sleep in Jesus are not lost to us, for they have only left us for a little while. Christ is the resurrection and the life, and we who remain are only waiting for the redemption of our bodies. Here we walk by faith, there we shall walk in the light of our Lord.

Let us remember that Jesus is the light of the world, and that only in His light shall we see light. He lets the light of His truth shine in our hearts by faith. His forgiveness drives away the darkness of our sin and guilt, for His blood cleanses us from all sin. In Him was light, and He was the light that shineth for every man that cometh into the world. Let us bid Jesus to come unto us so that He may lighten our darkness and defend us from all the dangers and troubles of this life.

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

The Holy Spirit Our Helper.

LESSON: Gen. 1:2; Psalm 51:11; Isaiah 63:10-14; Joel 2:28, 29; Luke 11:13; John 3:5-8; 14:26; 16:7-14; Acts 1:8; 2:1-4; 32, 33; 4:31; 10:44-48; 19:1-7; Romans 8:9, 12-17, 26-28; I Cor. 12:1-13; II Cor. 13:14; Gal. 5:22-26; Rev. 1:10; 22:17. Print John 3:5-8; Acts 1:8; Romans 8:26-28; Gal. 5:22-26.

GOLDEN TEXT: "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God." Rom. 8:14.

DEVOTIONAL READING: John 14:12-21.

INTER. & SR. TOPIC: The Helper We Need and Have.

Y. P. & ADULTS: What the Holy Spirit Does for Us.

There is more vague thinking on the subject of the Holy Spirit among Christian people than perhaps upon any other single subject. The *business* of the Holy Spirit is to reveal to us the things of Christ. The Holy Spirit does not witness to nor speak of Himself, but rather witnesses to and speak of Jesus Christ. Consider this illustration. I read the print before me with my eye. When I pick up a page, however, I do not instantly become conscious of my eyes and say, "Now, eyes, show me the letters. Let me see them clearly one by one." Nor does the eye make any noise or fuss as it

goes about its work. Unobtrusively, quietly, simply, it takes the print of the page, transfers it by its wonderful powers to the nerves of the brain. Yet it is the eye that is doing the work all the time, making clear to me the message of the printed page. As I become engrossed in the subject matter which I read I forgot all about my eyes but they are doing their work. Just so it is with the Holy Spirit. His function is to take the things of Christ and make them real and plain to us and in so doing He effaces Himself and we forget all about Him. He is, however, a personality. He is one of the three Persons of the Godhead. The Holy Spirit is not a doctrine. He is a Presence. He has the attributes of a Person ascribed to Him in Scripture. He loves, He is true, He is Holy, He is full of grace. He can be lied to as Peter tells Ananias and He can be sinned against as our Saviour taught us. The Holy Spirit does the work of a person. Creation is His work. Regeneration, teaching, comforting, are all parts of His work. The Holy Spirit is everywhere referred to as a person. See John 14:6. The Holy Spirit loves. See Romans 15:30 and Romans 5:5. The Holy Spirit is called "The Good Spirit," "The Spirit of Grace," the "Spirit of Adoption" whereby we cry Abba, Father," the "Spirit of Liberty," "The Comforter." Through the Holy Spirit the world was created. See Job 33:4. The Holy Spirit inspired the Bible. See II Samuel 23:1-2; Acts 28:25; II Peter 1:21. The Epistles to the seven churches of Asia are concluded with the admonition, "He that hath an ear let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches."

The Holy Spirit has had intimate relations with men in all the ages. He strove with the men of the Antedeluvian period He gave wisdom to Joseph, He furnished the skilled cunning of the workmen of the tabernacle. He gave Joshua courage. He hid Elijah from his enemies. By His power Jesus Christ was conceived by the Virgin Mary.

The Holy Spirit dwells in believers. See Ezekiel 36:27; John 14:17. He is poured out upon young and old. Joel 2:28. He was sent into the world by Christ. Matt. 3:11. He is given in answer to prayer. Luke 11:13. He empowers for service. Acts 1:8. He bears witness with us that we are the sons of God. Rom. 8:16; Gal. 4:6. He is a teacher. Nehemiah 9:20; John 14:26. He may be sinned against. Isaiah 63:10; Matt. 12:31; Mark 3:29. He may withdraw from men. Gen. 6:3; Psalm 51:11. He guides into all truth. John 16:13. He is called the Spirit of Truth. John 14:17. He is the Comforter. John 15:26. He abides forever. John 14:16. He brings to remembrance the words of Christ. John 14:26. He convicts the world of sin. John 16:7, 8.

EVENING SERMON

THEME: ***Autumn Leaves.***

GEORGE MCPHERSON HUNTER, D. D.

TEXT: "Nevertheless he left not himself without witness." Acts 14:17.
HYMNS: "For the beauty of the earth. . . ."—*Dix,* 7s, 61.
"Great God, we sing that Mighty Hand. . . ."—*Luther's Christ, L. M.*

The streets, the fields, the hills are covered with withered yellow leaves. Frost and wind has come. The tang of autumn is in the air and every tree and bush is afire with gorgeous coloring.

God's tongue is speaking to us from every flaming tree in the wood. Those leaves with rich coloring are crying out, "Behold your God. How excellent are all his works." Very early in the Bible, leaves are mentioned. They are unfortunately related to human history, sin and redemption.

Eve who listened to the seductive voice of the tempter fell from her innocency, became ashamed and coated herself with leaves. Noah, craving for release, sent out a dove. It brought back a leaf, emblem of peace.

Job talks about "driven leaves," drifting before the winds, huddling in corners, flying over roofs, swished by every eddy of wind. A picture of Godless men buffeted, driven hither and thither by every gust of passion.

God's world is beautifully painted in gorgeous colors—as the year begins to die. He has prepared a beautiful dress of many colors. God, the worker, has been busy all the year, moving slowly, without haste or waste; God the artist is at work painting the hills, the valley, the fields, crying out to all workers and artists in the world, "Behold your master is at work, strength and beauty are in his hands."

Leaves, Symbol of God's Faithfulness:

The old promise of God has been verified, "that sunshine and rain, seed time and harvest shall not fail throughout the earth." Men have ploughed, harrowed, sowed, reaped and God has done his share in the world's work.

Without the leaves there would have been no fruit, no shelter for the birds. Last spring the songsters would have died in the woods. Without leaves the woods would be filled with phantom trees, dead trees. Without leaves on the trees men would have wilted in the sunshine. "I never knew the value of trees until I went to where there were no trees," a travelling man once told me.

A desert is a place without trees. What a wilderness of a world we would have if there had been no trees and no leaves in this great State.

But the leaves are here thank God, *symbols of His faithfulness.*

Those rustling leaves, carpeting the brown earth, hiding the scars of nature, the quivering amber glories of the shady lanes are signals, that sun, rain and wind have swept the earth and the leaves are flaming out the good news of God's faithfulness on every tree.

Leaves Proclaim God's Beauty:

There is really nothing hidden in the world. What God and man are in the hidden parts of their hearts all comes out in their work. The thoughts of your brain, the emotions, the desires of your soul all the hidden life of man is revealed. What we are is betrayed on our faces. What a man is is known by his walk.

If a man is upright in heart he walks uprightly.

Now what is in God, all His mercy, His kindness, His hidden splendour and stooping glory, we see flamed out on the hillsides. Supposing you were a visitor from another world. Supposing you dropped down for the first time to make a call on us, from that yellow star that gleams over that valley every night. Supposing you had dropped in on this world last week, when the sun was shining, the wind was stirring the leaves, the infinite haze of God

hung the variegated beauty of the woods. Would you not ask Who made all this? Who painted the hillside glories? Well these are but the revelations of God.

God's character has blazed out on the trees, God the Father has flamed into speech. His latent beauty is crying out in the Sumach, the stately Elm, the lonely Pine and the sturdy Oak, and the scarlet of the Maple, like trumpets calling as we pass.

"What an imagination God has," exclaimed a poet.

Yes, but what a sense of beauty God has, he might have said.

Job challenged his tormentors with, "Array thyself with glory and beauty."

He was not asking for an exhibition of power but a revelation of beauty. I am sure it was on an Autumn day that the Psalmist said,

> "One thing have I desired that I may seek after
> That I may dwell in the house of the Lord,
> All the days of my life,"
>
> and "behold the beauty of the Lord."

In my travelling I have often been the guest of many good hearted folks. I have been put in the guest chamber, where the best rugs are, the best curtains, the nicest pictures on the walls, the best books. Nothing too good for the guest and the pilgrim.

Are we not all guests in God's world? God treats his guests to the best. In His world there is nothing too good for men, saint and sinner, all alike are handsomely treated. He is the host, we are the guests. He has painted the best pictures for us.

God's Best Last:

Now God is closing the year. He has filled the cellars with fruits, preserves, grain and fine preparations for the winter days. The storehouses of the cities.

Ships are going abroad filled with grains. He hath not dealt so with any nation as He has dealt with America.

The red: There's a scarlet thread running through the Bible from Genesis to Revelations. Redemption is of the blood of God's son.

Look at the yellow leaves. Yellow in the Bible always signifies holiness, separation from sin. All the vessels on the altar in the tabernacle were yellow. The breast plate on the high Priest's garments were yellow. The tassels of His robes were yellow. Yellow is the sacred color of the East to this day. Buddhist priests wear yellow robes, symbol of their office. Brahmins carry a yellow cord showing their separation from the world of ordinary people.

Will you this day let the yellow leaves of the Autumn speak to you of your consecration to God of the day you said in your heart "I will be thine now and forever."

Let those falling leaves speak of the steadfast grace of our Lord Christ. Let the abundance of leaves remind you of the vast store houses of God, love, pity and tender mercy.

Let them cry out to you as you pass by, "Behold the amazing fidelity of your God."

MID-WEEK SERMON

THEME: ***Playing the Game Through.***

TEXT: Matthew 10:22.

Newspaper story: Two girls with 'dates' at High School Commencement. One discovered spot on hem of dress: cancelled date, spent evening in tears and near hysterics. Other looking pale and worn: took drink of water, went through program, retired to room, collapsed. Had received telegram earlier: fiance killed in auto accident. Tradition in family not to allow personal affairs to interfere with others. Father had gone through a sit-down strike: sat in office, gun in one hand, playing with mechanical toys with other. Family in ignorance until all over.

Playing the Game Through: Start with premise: the job is worth doing. Quitting easiest thing we do, and becomes easier every time we drop a project. Destroys power to stick, working ability. Results in ultimate failure of life. "Sticking" strengthens will power; develops creative ability; brings lasting satisfaction in job well done; ensures highest measure of success. Text.

"Sticking" With Christ: The ideals and teachings of Christ: impractical? The acknowledgement of God in life; purity and integrity the goal of character; spirit of brotherhood in all human relationships; the power of an endless life; "the perseverance of the saints." What is impractical about this? Text.

"Sticking" With the Church: God's purpose in the Church: expression and development of the soul in worship; fellowship of Christian people—building up in life of ideals and purposes, elimination of faults; participation in service—propagation and expansion. All three are necessary for the fullest life. Text.

TOPICS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE'S SOCIETIES

CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR: Y. P.—Our Community—the Young People. I John 1:3-7. Jr.—Religion of the Jews. Deut. 6:4-9, 10:12-13, 19-22.

WALTHER LEAGUE: October Topic, Our associates in Business. You and Your Employer. Fellow Employees. Attitude toward Employer. Is your Employer's Business one that builds better Christians?

FOR THE BULLETIN BOARD

His is a tender hand on the bridle-rein.
Immortality, too, is living.
The powers of life must be sweeter than today's powers of death.
Even an insurance company survives on life's expectancies.
No great flame but from a small spark.

OCTOBER, FOURTH SUNDAY

CALL TO WORSHIP: "As the heart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after Thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God."
PSALM: 97.
PRELUDE: Elevation in C—*Rockwell.*
ANTHEM: O Gladsome Light—*Sullivan.*
OFFERTORY: Offertory in F—*Stultz.*
POSTLUDE: Exultate Deo—*Lacey.*
OFFERTORY SENTENCE: "Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over shall men give unto your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal, it shall be measured to you again."
OFFERTORY PRAYER: Only through Thee can we follow the path of righteousness and bear love toward our fellow-men. Give us grace to remain near to Thee. Accept our offering, bless it to Thy use. Bless us now and in the year ahead, so we may have a part in Thy work.
BENEDICTION: Grace, mercy and peace from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord be with you always.

SERMONS

Festival of the Reformation.

THEME: *"I Have Kept the Faith."*

MARTIN SCHROEDER, D. D.

SCRIPTURE: II Timothy 4:1-8. II Timothy 4:7.
HYMNS: "A Mighty Fortress is our God."—*Ein' feste Burg,* 87, 87, 5556, 7.
"Hasten, Lord, the Glorious Time."—*Innocents,* 77, 77.

October 31, or the Sunday nearest to it, is observed in the Protestant world as the Festival of the Reformation. It marks the day when in 1517 Martin Luther, in defiance of the established church, nailed his 95 theses to the door of the Castle church at Wittenberg. His words were a protest and a challenge to men and conditions within the church. From that day on there was no turning back. The Reformation was on its way, marked by this public demonstration of the great reformer whose courage of conviction blasted a passage for others to follow.

What came after this act was the fate encountered by most men and women who reject custom and tradition and put into their place the application of principles that will bring civilization ever closer to the realization of the Kingdom that is to come, that is, adhering in thought, word and deed to the Master's injunction, "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God." This means to fight; to fight in a fashion for which St. Paul gives us the example.

The reformation itself is not marked by a date, as this festival may suggest. It is not even a period as observed by church historians for marking their chapters or naming their books. Reformation is a ceaseless struggle of the Christian idealists against the inroads of the world upon the Christian life and against the barnacles of useless, if not harmful traditions, reducing the vitality of the church. Every convinced and active Christian is a participant in that reformation which knows no end until the coming of the day of the Lord. The first as well as the last in the church militant must be able to say in the end with Paul,

"I Have Fought a Good Fight!"

I. How St. Paul could say these words.

To comprehend fully the words of our text it is necessary to realize the circumstances under which they were written. We must picture St. Paul possibly chained to the wall of the death house in his Roman prison. Perhaps he could see the nearby platform with the block from which within a short time his head would roll under the executioner's ax. It was in such an atmosphere that Paul wrote that brief summary of his record and expectation.

Without fear he sees a violent death approaching him. It is a peaceful and satisfied look backwards over his past life. It is a vision of victory and triumph which he sees when the ax has done its deadly work.

His exclamation "I have fought a good fight" suggests the tension of a long struggle with forces which have tried to interfere with his revolutionary influence, but in vain. Whatever successes were now to his credit, were successes he had to fight for, and everything which was done by him was accomplished after a struggle.

Obstacles lurked for him from many directions. Bodily punished by rulers and his own people, in shipwreck, in hunger and thirst, in coldness and nakedness. Apart from these difficulties, he had to say, "there is that which presseth upon me daily, anxiety for all the churches." (II Cor. 11:24-28.) Though these things may occur in any mortal's life, St. Paul endured them for the Gospel's sake.

Paul had also a physical affliction. He called it the thorn in his flesh. Three times he besought the Lord, as only a Paul could implore the divine mercy, to give him good health. But as often as that, God made it plain to him that his spiritual strength was of far greater importance than any physical force or health that he might command. Thereafter Paul began to boast of his infirmities. "When I am weak, then I am strong;" a paradox to those to whom the Gospel is foolishness, but not for those who aspire to the crown of life.

But what is the raging of a storm at sea or the fury of a mob against the storm that rages in the soul of man when he is compelled by conscience to follow a course that is contrary to the mind of the flesh and blood that love you, contrary to the people of whose blood you are and whose God you were taught to worship? It is a conflict among loyalties, the most difficult ones that man can encounter. But his supreme attachment conquered. The day was when even Peter and Barnabas could not see eye to eye with this greatest of them all. So in this struggle for the crown Paul had even to rebuke his friends, one of them declared by the Master himself as possessing a faith comparable to a rock.

The intellectuals of his day smiled at his extravagant statements, but he could say, "I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ," and continued to preach, "God raised him from the dead."

Surveying all the difficulties that he had to endure, from within and without, he comes to the end and draws the balance on his life. What was the gain? What was the loss? Whatever these may be from human point of view, he does not care. Of one thing he is sure, "I have kept the faith." It was a fight to do so, but, as you see, it was a good fight. It was such

heroism of Paul and other faithful followers of Christ that enables us to sing today,

My church, my church, my dear old church,
My fathers' and my own.
On prophets and apostles built,
And Christ the corner stone.

II. How the Reformers could say these words.

There can be no disagreement as to the fact that the willingness of St. Paul to bear hardships even unto death resulted in the Gospel being brought to other countries and other people. There must also be little disagreement that the evangelicals, the protestants, the reformers by whatever name you want to call them, of the 15th and 16th centuries would have made no impression upon the world had they not been willing to bring sacrifices and bear hardships including the giving up of life itself. We think of Savonarola, Wycliff, William Tyndale, John Knox, John Huss, Ulrich Zwingli, John Calvin, Martin Luther and all their co-workers, realizing that their insistence on New Testament principles, inviting the displeasure of church and state alike, placed them into those great dangers for conscience sake. Excommunicated, way-laid, driven into exile, tortured and burned at the stake, one or more of these treatments were meted out by the powers that be to those who were striving to keep the faith as delivered by the saints.

III. How we may say these words.

We are looking upon the achievements of the apostles and the reformers in observing the festival of the reformation. With due respect to all that which the church's leadership, past and present, has done, are we today fully sincere and entitled to sing as we do,

All else beside, by storm and tide,
May yet be overthrown,
But not my church, my dear old church,
My fathers' and my own.

The question is perfectly proper to ask, in how far is the present generation willing to fight for the retention of a living faith as the Apostle Paul or the reformers have done it? How many are there in the universal Christian community who are prepared to be persecuted for values involved in their faith? Is it not true that compromise with the world and conformity to uncertain ideas of the past are too often the guiding light in the life of the church? Reformation for the church from within and without has not ended. Disputes over principles on denominational convention floors are the evidence. Where once it was the question of worldliness, corruption, the Bible in the vernacular, sale of indulgences and obedience to a foreign bishop, it is now the question of spiritual unity of all believers, obedience to the King of kings and cooperation in establishing the Kingdom for whose coming we pray daily—but are so slow in applying its precepts. Unless we today can say with the men and women of conviction of the first and sixteenth century, "I have fought a good fight, I have kept the faith," we have no right to claim the crown of victory.

This is not easy. Because we happen to be born into a church whose hardest struggles for existence lie in the past, and though a great deal of our worship is at the feet of those fathers who fought for the faith, it does not constitute our title to the crown of righteousness. Indeed we must be extremely cautious in giving ourselves credit. The reason is very simple.

We are the children of our age, as St. Paul was of his and the reformers were of theirs. It is hard to rise above that fact. Not only are we the children of our age, we are its prisoners. Most of that which we think and do, is done under present influence of environment. "Stone walls do not a prison make, nor iron bars a cage." There are other restricting powers.

St. Paul was such a prisoner of his age. He proclaimed with passionate assurance that the end of the world and return of Christ were imminent. Paul meant well. So, in view of this he advised against marriage, considering the brevity of the time left.

The reformers were prisoners of their age. It is very doubtful whether they considered themselves the culmination of the expression of Christian faith for all ages that were to come. Where we insist on such interpretation of their lives and labors we commit an injustice to both them and ourselves. Where they were much concerned with the inner man, present-day Christianity is called upon to apply the social implications of the teachings of Christ in an unprecedented manner. Where the church fails in this, she fails in the esteem she should enjoy in a world groping in darkness. For such reason the influence of the church has been eliminated as a potent agency for good in several countries already, where the state has taken over the duty to determine standards of life and conduct. These standards are in some cases the very antithesis of the teachings of Christ. It should not happen here.

If therefore we celebrate the Festival of the Reformation, let us think of the work that is left for us to do. Let us take to heart what Justus Falckner has written and we often sing,

Rise ye children of salvation,
All who cleave to Christ the head!
Wake, arise, O mighty nation,
Ere the foe on Zion tread;
He draws nigh and would defy
All the hosts of God Most High.

Twentieth Sunday After Trinity.

THEME: *A Good Man.*

CHARLES HADDON NABERS, D. D.

TEXT: Psalm 1:3.
HYMNS: "Jesus, Thy boundless Love to me. . . ."—*Prince, L. M.*
"From every stormy wind that blows. . . ."—*Retreat, L. M.*

Two figures of speech in the Word of God describe a good man. One is of a building; the second is of a tree. Both are combined in that great phrase of Paul to men of Ephesus: "Being rooted and grounded in love."

The example above all others for life being a building is from the lips of Jesus at the end of the Sermon on the Mount: "Whosoever heareth these

sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock."

The example above all others of a life likened unto a plant is from the opening psalm: "He shall be like a tree."

How dear to our hearts are the beloved trees of our childhood, when flashes of sweet memory bring them to view! How securely entwined about the heart-strings of men are trees! How much trees contribute to life, and how they bring beauty as well as usefulness and wealth to the world!

"He shall be like a tree!" The oldest of all living things on earth are the big redwood trees in the Sequoia National Park in California, older than any inhabitant of the earth, the heavens above the earth, or the waters beneath the earth. Something of the immortality of man is suggested when we look upon these growing and living trees whose life has extended many years. Surely the immortality of man is indicated by comparing him to the oldest living thing on earth.

"He shall be like a tree." In our first picture of the world Adam and Eve dwell in a garden. No garden can be perfect without trees; and to the oriental mind acquainted with many barren deserts of rocks and sand, all places with trees are gardens. In that earliest garden were trees, and our attention is directed towards two in particular: "The Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil," and the "Tree of Life in the midst of the Garden."

We name our books by trees: "The Trail of the Lonesome Pine" is but one example of many. We designate our battles by trees: the Battle of Seven Pines in Virginia. Labor and love are both inseparably connected with trees. "Under the spreading chestnut tree, the village smithy stands" and toils. "In the shade of the old apple tree" heart is joined with heart. When we want to designate our unity with past generations, we look up our ancestors and call it "The Family Tree."

When fierce winds seemed about to turn the land of the west into deserts, and the cry went up for some preventive measure, the experts declared: "Plant trees." My clearest memory of things within an old Chatauqua tent was a lecture by Governor Shallenberger of Nebraska on the wasteful policy of America in slaughtering our wonderful trees. One of the finest things born in the Theodore Roosevelt administration was a program of conserving our material resources, beginning in many places with a regard for the trees. In walking with two Alabama lumber men some years ago by the campus of a great woman's college, I heard one ask the other, "Can there be anything more beautiful than a young woman?" and the other replied, "Yes, a perfect tree." Evidently his concept of trees was like that of Joyce Kilmer.

"He shall be like a tree!" He is living, this good man who is pleasing unto God. Every living thing is a growing thing. The Christian is alive unto God, and growing in the knowledge of Christ every day. A Christian needs to be a hundred per cent alive. The Christian needs to be vital and alert in every sector of society. It is therefore the responsibility of every Christian to be living for Christ, and to be growing in the ways pleasing to God. It is often easier to die for a great cause in a spectacular battle in an hour of glorious faith and decision than to live for the cause day by day and week by week, amid the nagging and criticizing of constant bickerers.

"So he died for his faith! That is fine,
More than most of us do.
But stay, can you add to that line,
That he lived for it too?

"It is easy to die. Men have died
For a wish or a whim—
From bravado or passion or pride.
Was it harder for him?

"But to live; every day to live out
All the truth that he dreamt,
While his friends met his conduct with doubt,
And the world with contempt?"

John Oxenham declared that there are two great roads along which men walk, either to enlargement of life, or to the gradual smothering of one's best self. He says:

"To every man there openeth,
A Way, and ways, and a way,
And the high soul climbs the high way
And the low soul gropes the low;
And in between, on the misty flats,
The rest drift to and fro,
But to every man there openeth
A high way and a low,
And every man decideth
The way his soul shall go."

If a man is to be like a tree, he shall grow in the knowledge, but likewise in the grace of Christ, his motto shall be, "For me to live is Christ," and his never forgotten purpose is, "I determined to know nothing among you but Jesus Christ and Him crucified."

"He shall be like a tree *planted*." Every man's life is a definite plan of God. In the universe of Jehovah there are no accidents. In the forests of God there are no unplanted trees. I have a work that I am to do for God, and nobody else can do it. If I fail, that work for eternity is undone. God's plan depends upon my co-operation, and He set me where I am for His purpose. A man is immortal until his work is completed. When God created man in the image of God, set him in the world to control its gigantic powers and sent forth Christ to redeem them, God stamped human personality with the insignia of unforgettable greatness. Every man a definite task; all co-workers with God in building a heavenly kingdom on this little planet of weal and woe. You are planted here for a great task; no man is without his definite work to do.

"He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water." Man is not put in the midst of a spiritual desert where the nourishment necessary for his growth and development are not to be found. He is set beside the streams of water—spiritual rivers to feed his thirsty soul, where all the conditions essential to growth can be immediately and constantly fulfilled. On your table is the Bible,—the message of God for the conduct of human life. With us always is the opportunity of both prayer and worship, two divinely blessed means by which God's children grow and develop. We are placed

by God for His glory and for our good. Rivers of life-giving water from the springs of God flow beside our lives daily, and our roots may drink therefrom and be glad.

The tree thus placed by God shall be pleasing unto God. What will characterize its life? The leaf of the tree shall not wither. Its appearance shall therefore be a delight to those who behold it in the garden of the Lord. It shall bring forth its fruit in its regular appointed season. Fruit has its season, and we expect no fruit except at the God-appointed time. But when the time comes, fruit comes. The man of God shall so stand that Christ can look upon a group of them, and say, "By their fruits ye shall know them," know them to belong to God in hopes, purposes and powers as well as fruits. Prosperity shall attend the man of God. "And whatsoever he doeth shall prosper." Over his life hangs the emerald rainbow of mercy. Upon his life is the smile of the Most High.

"Blessed is the man," God's man, "like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he soeth shall prosper."

PRAYER

O Heavenly Father, fill our hearts with reverence and overcoming admiration as we view Thy handiwork as shown us in nature, and as shown us in the great and lasting accomplishments of men who have followed after Thee.

Help us to rise to higher levels of thought and action, as we compare our own gifts of Thy love with those Thou hast bestowed upon other creations of Thy hand. Lend Thou us a bit of Thy insight into the things which help men to rise to Thy challenge. Help us to see the sins, the faults, the shortcomings that keep us back from the summit of accomplishment; help us overcome the meanness that causes us to slip in the path upward, so that we may triumph in our desire to carry on where Thy love wouldst lead us.

We ask in Jesus' Name.

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

Civic Responsibility Regarding Beverage Alcohol (International Temperance Sunday).

LESSON: Deut. 5:32, 33; 11:26-28; Isaiah 28:1-6; Hab. 2:12.

GOLDEN TEXT: "Righteousness exalteth a nation; But sin is a reproach to any people." Prov. 14:34.

DEVOTIONAL READING: Isaiah 2:2-5.

INTER. & SR. TOPIC: What Our Community Can Do about the Drink Problem.

Y. P. & ADULTS: Civic Responsibility Regarding the Drink Problem.

From the headquarters of the Anti-Saloon League in Washington, D. C., the teacher may secure much material in regard to the tragic, economic loss being sustained annually by this country through the production and consumption of alcoholic beverages. More than three billion dollars was spent in 1940 for intoxicating liquors. This money if applied to constructive,

permanent improvements would accomplish a staggering amount of good. No nation can drink itself to prosperity as no nation can spend itself to prosperity.

We hear much about the modern world. But the Ten Commandments will not budge and in spite of all of our boasted progress we are unbelievably belated in many ways. The race discovered through long, agonizing centuries of upward climb that alcohol taken to excess destroys everything that is fine and noble and true in life. And yet in this boasted scientific age we refuse to accept this proven scientific fact. More and more the consumption of liquor among women is increasing. Every doctor will tell you what this means for the future generation. No nation can survive the debauching of its womanhood just as no nation can survive on a constantly increasing deficit in the operation of its temporal affairs. In this boasted scientific age we are pursuing financial policies that are idiotic and moral policies that are suicidal.

The teacher should remind the class that God is not partial to democracies. He sent His own people into captivity because they violated His laws. He will turn America into the gates of Hell if we persist nationally in violating His just and good law.

At the present time there are more than five times as many places licensed to dispense intoxicating liquors as there were in the United States before the adoption of the Prohibition Amendment. Furthermore, intoxicating liquors are more easily procured now than they were ever before.

Today there is one saloon or tavern where liquor is sold for every 300 people in America.

11 saloons for every 5 churches.

1 saloon for every 71 homes.

In 1939 the country spent $24.64 for every man, woman and child for alcoholic liquor and consumed 14 gallons each.

For every $1.00 the liquor business paid in taxes the City, State and National Governments paid out $16.00 for crime, poverty, disease, relief occasioned by the business.

This is moral idiocy and economic insanity.

EVENING SERMON

THEME: ***What Is Protestantism.***

GORDON W. MATTICE, D. D.

HYMNS: "Now I have found the Ground. . . ."—*Winchester Now,* 88, 88, 88.
"Come, ye that love the Lord. . . ."—*Kane, S. M. D.*

Reformation Day is one of the most important days of the Protestant Church Year. The occasion which precipitated the Protestant Reformation was Luther's act of nailing ninety-five theses on the door of the Castle Church at Wittenburg in 1517.

But the Reformation began far back of this. Many factors had been leavening the life and thought of that day. The woeful condition of the Church, with abuses of power, with its literal obedience to forms, but lacking

in spirit; the spiritual unrest of the people who did not find in the Church that for which they yearned; the societies of learning who were challenging the assumptions of the Church fathers; the civil authorities chafing under the domination of Rome—all of these contributed to the building up of that which broke forth into a vigorous protest. It was Luther who touched the spark to the powder keg.

It is with the purpose of having us come to a heightened appreciation of our birth-right that I ask you consider with me an answer to the question, "What is Protestantism?"

Let us first get clearly in mind seven fundamental principles of Protestant Christianity. These form the historic basis of our faith. Ditterich formulates them thus:

1. That God is our Father, that all men have the right of free access to Him, irrespective of man-made restrictions.
2. That no institution may deprive men of the sacred and inalienable right of private judgment and liberty of conscience.
3. That the Holy Scriptures contain all things necessary to show men the way of true living here, and of eternal felicity hereafter, and that the voice of God in His Word is superior to that of any Church organization.
4. That the conditions of salvation taught in the New Testament are final, and that no Church organization has the right to alter them.
5. That the true Church consists of all sincere believers in Jesus Christ, and is not limited by any professed power.
6. That salvation is obtained solely by a faith in the Lord Jesus Christ which accepts His grace of pardon, and that no mediator between God and man but Christ is required.
7. That the state is free, and not subject to dictation from any foreign prelate.

Our faith is infinitely more than a protest against the doctrines and practices of the Roman Church. It is the positive assertion of principles. The Protestant Reformers saw that the Church had somehow slipped away from the foundation of Christ and the Apostles and had wrought all kinds of strange materials into the house of God. They went back to the divine foundation, and building thereon, according to the specifications laid down in His Word by the great Architect of the Church, reforming it after the pattern shown there. We believe that our faith is Scriptural. It is a Rational Faith. The Reformers, while duly subordinating reason to revelation, recognized the former as a divine gift, and demanded a creed, a discipline and a worship which should not outrage man's rational nature. It is a Personal faith. We believe in direct and personal access of the soul to God.

The future of both world and American culture lies with one of three forces, Roman Catholicism, Protestantism, or secularism. There are no other alternatives. Standing on this broad base line, and looking with appreciation on the whole field, we can have only one answer. Our answer to it presupposes tolerance and fair play.

Until Protestantism confronts its task in conscious recognition of the widespread and active hostility to all religion, and projects its own program on the major premise that true Christianity is the matrix of civilized culture, it will not have measured up in any sense to both the dream and sacrifices of those who gave us this faith we cherish.

There should not be a spiritual rivalry for the soul of America. Nothing could so sadly exhaust Christian energies. It is because we are concerned about the trend of the world and its people away from God and the teachings of Christ, that we do well to consider the place that Protestantism should play in the continuance of a re-building of the spiritual foundations of mankind.

Let it be said that the emergence of Protestantism some four hundred years ago was not due to capricious revolt; rather, men moved by the spirit of God, gave utterance to priceless and glorious religious truths. Protestantism is a continuous thing, rather than an historic fact accomplished once and for all at some time and place; it is therefore cumulative, rather than final. Inquire into Protestantism and ask what it offers.

I. *Is it a religion capable of adaptation to progress?* Can it adjust itself to advancing knowledge in the realm of scientific thought and observation? Mankind is thoroughly committed to the method and spirit of modern science. No religion can ultimately flourish as a part of real life if it does not heartily and unreservedly respect the rights of scientific inquiry. I believe that it can be said very fairly that in Protestantism we find the best hope of such adjustment.

We do not claim that we are entirely committed to the scientific spirit and that Roman Catholicism is wholly opposed to it. There have been distinguished leaders in the scientific world who were devout Roman Catholics, and Protestantism has had its obscurantist reactions. Dr. Merrill points out a fundamental difference at this point. By its very nature, Protestantism leaves the intellect free, while Roman Catholicism claims the right to pass judgment on what may or may not be accepted. No religion which holds certain allegations of fact as essential, which it is unwilling to submit to scientific investigation, can minister adequately to the religion of the present or of the future. We cannot forget what Louis Pasteur, one of the greatest and noblest of all scientists said, and he was a devout Roman Catholic: "When I enter my laboratory, I close the door on my oratory (place of prayer); when I enter my oratory, I close the door on my laboratory." As a scientist he must have known better than that. To live thus in air-tight compartments is impossible. Protestantism holds the best and surest hope of development into a religion that can live on terms of mutual respect with modern science and progressive ways of thought. Protestantism offers the best soil in which may grow up an intellectually self-respecting religion.

II. *Is Protestantism committed to the New Testament as a standard to which it continually resorts to test its beliefs and practices?* We believe that nothing must be made essential to the Christian religion and to the Church which is not in plain accord with the ideals, principles and spirit of the New Testament. Protestantism holds that Jesus called his followers into a fellowship, which he left free to develop its methods, orders and administration,

to suit the changing conditions of the world and that any man whom the spirit of God may call is a valid minister of the Word and the Sacraments.

Let any impartial observer visit countries that are predominently Catholic, and those are normally Protestant, and let him compare the moral tone and atmosphere. What does one find? Without expection Protestantism has always insisted on the highest moral code and practice. This is not to imply that all Roman Catholics are immoral, and all Protestants moral, but the tend is always observable.

III. *Where does Protestantism stand with reference to Democracy?* It is not by accident that we have always worked hand in hand for the development and maintenance of popular government. We have exalted the freedom of the conscience and constitutional democracy. National religion has been repressed by Romanism, which aimed at complete subjection of the Church of each nation to an ecclesiastical hierarchy subservient to Rome. The Reformers developed the protest, already frequent, against papal intervention into the principle of national religious independence—the principle that the Church of each nation, while a part of Christendom, had the right to determine the details of its own discipline, ritual and even creed. We believe that authority in the Church and in the State must come from God through the whole body of society, rather than through self-appointed men. We do not disown authority; we put it where it belongs.

IV. *What about the hope of religious unity?*

The past few years have seen great forward strides toward the unity of Christendom. Three world-wide conferences have been held, to which all who held the Christian faith were invited. All other groups were represented, but not the Roman Church. We have seen the rise of inter-faith committees and activities, and for this we thank God. Forums where representatives of Judaism, Roman Catholicism and Protestantism have spoken, have been widely held. But the cooperation is more apparent than real. Between Jews and Protestants the cooperation is hearty and fruitful. On the other side it is grudging and specious. The hierarchy lends no official sanction to Roman Catholic representatives, and has been known to inhibit the participation of many whose presence is solicited. Practically the entire financial support of unity efforts comes from Jews and Protestants.

Even so, we do not withdraw the hand of fellowship. But these honest facts must be stated. In a day when it is needed so desperately, it must be recognized that only in Protestantism is there any real hope of religious unity.

There are faults in Protestantism. We have grown some unlovely fruit; there are things that disfigure and weaken. Protestantism has exercised its critical powers upon itself more freely than has any other form of religious faith known to history. We are daily striving to bring all into complete accord with the spirit and teachings of our Crucified and Risen Lord and Saviour.

It will be understood that Protestantism implies, by its very nature, the full and enthusiastic support of those of its persuasion. Things cannot just be left "to the Church" or to "the clergy." It depends upon the loyalty and awakened conscience of its people. That is at once its weakness and its

glory. If Protestantism is weak or in danger, it is not always because of critics and foes without, but rather more often from the inertia, lethargy and half-heartedness of its own household of faith.

Take a simple illustration of this. Protestantism has never demanded that its people attend Church services regularly; it has not threatened them if they have stayed away. Rather, in the spirit of what it has considered true religion and democracy it has told its people that regular and faithful Church attendance and support, participation in its program, is a spiritual obligation. It has told its people that the services and activities are planned to enrich faith, to strengthen and encourage and bless. Yet how we Protestants have forsaken the altars of the Church for the pursuit of pleasure, and excused our absence because of comfort and convenience! The average Roman Catholic will get up early every Sunday morning, regardless of how late he was out the night before, or what the weather may be, and go to his Church. I need not even describe what happens in the average Protestant home when the people have attended parties the night before, or when it is cold and wet outside. When a Roman Catholic considers buying a home, or going away on a vacation he always asks, "How near is the Church?" And the Protestant usually inquires, "How far away am I from a Church?" Yes, this is at once our weakness and our glory. I lay this upon your conscience.

Protestantism, the mother of American culture, must be awakened to the immeasurable values of the treasures in her possession, and to the danger that, if she slumbers, these treasures, given in trust for the world, may be lost.

Let us not betray the trust which we hold for Western civilization in general, and American democracy in particular. I call each of you to be loyal to the faith of your fathers, the faith once delivered to the saints.

PRAYER

May the Spirit of the Living God, who spake in the prophets and dwelt in the Lord Jesus Christ, awaken us to our high privilege and lead us and all men on to that better time when all men shall see the glory of the Lord, and there shall be one flock and one Shepherd, held together in the unity of the spirit, in the bond of peace, and in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free. Amen.

MID-WEEK SERMON

THEME: *Our Church and Our Prayers.*

TEXT: 2 Chronicles 7:15.

God, a personality. Mind: purposes and plans, considers and estimates, discerns and judges. Desire: loves and longs after good and lovely, hates intensely all unlovely and evil. Will: free to be modified. Father. Prayer a force that works on will of God. Conditions: sincere; clean; importunate; according to the will of God.

Prayer in the Church: Place of prayer: inner chamber; family circle; Church. Hannah; David; Isaiah. The Church a dedicated place. "Wail-

ing Wall": twenty-nine hundred years ago people gathered at that place for prayer, and continue to this day. Text. So our own Church. Has been a part of the city life for (54) years. Not long, but two generations have been born and have grown up. The fathers and grandfathers of many worshipped in this place. One great end of our program has been the creation of a spiritual atmosphere. We have sought to discover and reveal God's point of view.

Prayer for the Nation: The forgiveness of our sins, our smug complacency. The strengthening of our democracy, goodwill among classes, spread of the Gospel. The guarding of our shores, our place in the rebuilding of the world.

Prayer for the Church: The Church Universal; the Church in America; the churches of our city. Our own Church: needs it, facing problems and opportunities. God encourages it. He hallows this place. The interest of God's heart is with us. Individually we need the exercise. Losing interest? Inability to serve or contribute? Do you pray for your Church?

Backing Up Our Prayers: By our practice of Christianity: failure of Christians to manifest spirit of Christ. By our attendance on services. By boosting our own Church, Pastor, Workers, etc. Breaking down of denominationalism should not mean any loss of loyalty or obligation to a particular congregation. True prayer demands thoughtfulness. Thought will keep us in touch with needs, problems, and opportunities. These will send us to more and deeper prayer. God's eyes and heart are constantly with his people and his House.

TOPICS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE'S SOCIETIES

CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR: Y. P.—Our Community's Needs. Luke 4:16-20.
Jr.—What do we owe to the Jews? Ex. 20:1-17.
WALTHER LEAGUE: October Topic, Our Associates in Business. Service Project—Hold discussion of business standards tolerated in community. Discuss sermons you have heard on standards required of the Christian.

FOR THE BULLETIN BOARD

The seed dies into new and fuller life.
Time is still passing with its opportunities.
Dead is the hand that is not open.
To deny is to die.
Heaven's door is never locked.
"They have no heavenly Father such as cares for you and me."
The sun that veils itself will shine anew.
Even clouds have their work to do.
Some spirit must rule the hearts of men.
You must exhale or smother, wither or bloom.

FOR THE BULLETIN BOARD

There is nothing sweeter in life than honest labor and honest repose.
There is aways a possibility that the critic is right.
What would your possessions be worth without the church?
Good enough is rarely good enough.
It's not the man at the oars who rocks the boat.

NOVEMBER, FIRST SUNDAY

CALL TO WORSHIP: "The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon Him; to all that call upon Him in truth. He will fulfil the desire of them that fear Him; He also will hear their cry, and will save them."
PSALM: 96.
PRELUDE: Air for G String—*Bach.*
ANTHEM: I Love the Lord—*Hosmer.*
OFFERTORY: Moderato—*Merkel.*
POSTLUDE: Fourth Variation—*Bonnet.*
OFFERTORY SENTENCE: "Set your mind on the things that are above, not on the things that are upon the earth."
OFFERTORY PRAYER: Heavenly Father, our meagre gifts cannot express our gratitude to Thee for Thy love and care during the past year, and we bring them only as a token of our understanding of that which we have received at Thy hands. Accept our gifts, and accept our lives to Thy glory. Thou canst cause us to grow in grace, so that we may pass on Thy love to the people of the whole earth. Help us to accept Thy love and its meaning to Thy children everywhere.
BENEDICTION: The peace of God which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

SERMONS

THEME: *Infants Crying in the Night.*

HARRY W. STAVER, D. D.

SCRIPTURE: Isaiah 33.
TEXT: "What time I am afraid, I will trust in Thee." Psalm 56:3.
HYMNS: "Thine arm, O God, in days of old. . . ."—*Ecclesia, C. M. D.*
"High in the Heavens . . ."—*Depauw, L. M.*

Contemporary events, except to a few seers, are mostly incomprehensible. The average of us, thinking to interpret them, finds himself in a situation like that of the hymn writer who says, "By some vast deep I seem to stand, whose secret I must ask in vain." The experience is compassed for us, too, in the lines of Tennyson where he describes his own impotence with the words:

> "But what am I?
> An infant crying in the night;
> An infant crying for the light;
> And with no language but a cry."

No purpose is served in denying to ourselves the situation in which we actually are. Neither is there any virtue in deceiving ourselves about the way we feel in the face of things. We are confused and confounded. Multitudes are sick at heart in the midst of awful things. We are made disconsolate because of wicked men "who bring wicked devices to pass" and dismayed at the success of violence and the triumph of force and the barbarisms that holds everything holy in contempt. Nothing do we resemble more than "an infant crying in the night; an infant crying for the light; and with no language but a cry."

On the other hand, it is playing traitor to our highest selves if we ignore, scorn and reject those means which are available to keep the heart from fainting or failing altogether. When outer conditions are such that they bring dismay and make us feel like "an infant crying in the night," there is

only one wise thing to do. And that thing is to lay hold and make use of the spiritual things which build faith and hope and the confidence that we can be "more than conquerors through him who loves us." The Voice crying in the wilderness of our today is a voice that counsels us amidst "the noises and menacings and deliriums of the world" to "consult the Eternal Oracles."

Darkness and disaster are not new experiences in the life of man. They are as old as human folly and sin. But what we need to remember now is that in every age of human history and in every generation of human distress there have always been men greater than the darkness and distress whose spirit of confidence and words of faith have been "songs in the night." Knee-deep, even breast-high, they stand in the swirling waters of affliction being strangely stayed in the times of calamity. Just as the Apostle Paul said of himself, so these speak saying, "We are pressed on every side, yet not straitened; perplexed, yet not unto despair; pursued, yet not forsaken; smitten down, yet not destroyed." There is a triumph, whatever the tragedy may be, if we know the way of it.

Specific illustrations are better than glittering generalities. Hence we seek some of the stalwart souls in the Scripture story who suffered but did not succumb, who were shaken but still stood. Their experience is reproducible and it may be that we can learn their secret and come to walk in the light wherein they walked. Who are some of the men who triumphed over outer conditions because of their spirit within? There are the old prophets of God to consider. It doesn't make any difference which prophet one may choose. He may be one of the so-called Major prophets or one of the Minor prophets. They all have the same spirit, cherish the same hopes, pronounce the same message and stand in the same sort of strength.

One, rather naturally, thinks of the great Isaiah. Have you ever read the Book of Isaiah? Then you know the story of the mad winds that blow through it and the light that shines in it, a light those mad winds could not blow out. He pictures the wreckage and waste and weariness of tumult and war, but there is radiance and wonder that pales the wreckage and hope that eclipses the horror. And we hear the prophet saying, "They that dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath a great light shined. For unto us a child is born; unto us a son is given. And the government shall be upon his shoulder and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."

Amongst the great prophets of God, none suffered vaster national calamity and personal indignity than did Jeremiah. He is called the "weeping prophet," though we may not miss the fact that in him are triumphs and not tears alone. Jeremiah saw the collapse of the nation and his countrymen led away captive. He was accused of being a traitor and he suffered great ill-treatment in his own person. But he stands undaunted proclaiming these two imperishable truths: "the Infinite cannot be defeated" and "there is always light ahead."

And if we have regard for one like Micah, the prophet, there is the darkness and the light in him. He speaks saying to the people, "It shall be night unto you that ye shall have no vision. Zion shall be ploughed as a field, Jerusalem shall become a heap." Yet it is in Micah that we find the most

glorious prophecy of peace man ever heard or hoped for: "the day will come when they shall beat their swords into plough-shares and their spears into pruning-hooks. Nation shall not lift up sword against nation; neither shall they learn war any more." For all that such words, in our desperate days, sound like an empty and forlorn dream yet are they words that will never pass away till all be fulfilled.

If we find this sort of spirit in the Old Testament, we find it also in the New Testament shining through the life and teachings of Jesus, in the Acts of the Apostles and their Epistles. Nothing stands out with more positive emphasis than does the incessant affirmation of the New Testament that Love and Justice and Truth and God and all that is God's will must surely triumph. There is never a mood nor a moment when that persuasion is lost sight of. The devil is loosed for a time but the devil is chained in the end.

Of all the books in the New Testament none portrays so black a picture of devastation as does the book of Revelation. And none sounds a more glorious note of victory for spiritual things. As Joseph Fort Newton says: "In a dark day, against a black background, it is a book of white things: white clouds, white horses, white stones, white robes and a great white throne." Vials of wrath are poured out upon the earth; war, pestilence, famine and death ride thundering through the world; hail, thunder, lightnings, plagues fall upon men. Then the storm clears and the sun breaks through. And we hear John speaking: "I saw the Lamb standing on Mount Zion. I saw an angel having the eternal good tidings to them that dwell on the earth, to every nation and tribe and tongue and people. I heard a great voice in heaven saying, Glory and power belong to our God: let us rejoice and be exceeding glad and let us give glory unto Him. And I saw a new heaven and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness."

The valiant voices are always the victorious voices. There is a spirit that survives all suffering, that has a song in the night. There are the tears but there are the triumphs, too. And we dare to believe, dark and dreadful as things are, that the cross was not for nought nor the Saviour's dying in vain. We need not be "infants crying in the night." Christ gives us the "light of life," and there is God to "wipe away every tear" from our eyes.

Twenty-First Sunday After Trinity.

THEME: ***The Cost of a Revival.***

CHARLES HADDON HABERS, D. D.

TEXT: Ephesians 6:12.
HYMNS: "Come, Holy Ghost, in love . . ."—*Fiat Lux,* 664, 6664.
"Come, Gracious Spirit, Heavenly Dove. . . ."—*Wareham, L. M.*

In promoting revivals as well as in building towers, it is well to sit down first, and count the cost, and see if we have sufficient resources at hand to finish that which we begin, lest haply, after we have laid the foundation and find ourselves unable to complete it, we shall be the butt of irreligious humor to the effect that "These men began to build, but were not able to finish."

In which case, the cause of Christ is deeply injured both within and without His visible Church.

It will cost prayer. No revival has ever come without the highways thereto being paved by the vital, agonizing prayers of consecrated saints for their own souls and for the souls of sinners about them. The genesis of the famous American revival of 1857 was in the prayers of a bed-ridden woman who earnestly prayed for the saving of men, secured fellow intercessors, and continued to pray until a revival hardly without a parallel in Christian history broke out in widely separated portions of our country. A revival begins when praying begins. Praying begins in an inner circle of Christians who become keenly and sufferingly aware of the need for Christ in human life.

When Charles Haddon Spurgeon was pastor of the Metropolitan Tabernacle in London, a visitor from Liverpool planning the erection of a church in that city asked Spurgeon to show him the heating apparatus in the tabernacle. Instead of taking his visitor to the basement to see the furnace, the London preacher took him to a room where two hundred people were on their knees praying for the services soon to begin. Said Spurgeon: "This, my brother, is the heating apparatus for this church." Some church auditoriums are cold enough to serve as refrigerators in summer and winter, not because of a faulty furnace, but because of few intercessory prayers ascending therefrom.

A revival begins when praying begins. Praying begins in the inner circle, and begins with a petition for one's own soul and life. When a Scotch session was meeting at the beginning of a season set for revival, one elder began his prayer with these words: "O Lord, there are lots of folks around this city who never enter a church. We should like for them to come here." One of the other members of the session broke in, saying: "Forget them now, and pray for your own soul." The most effective congregation is not the wealthiest congregation, nor the most cultured congregation, nor the best organized congregation, but the congregation which prays oftenest, most earnestly, and most generally—that holds the greatest percentage of intercessors. That congregation creates a spiritual atmosphere so that the Spirit of God is released with power and life in the services.

The difference between the preaching of Simon Peter in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost when three thousand were converted and the preaching of Paul in Athens when hardly anything happened was not the difference between a good sermon and a poor sermon, not the difference between a truly spiritual minister and one who was unspiritual, but in the fact that in Jerusalem Simon Peter was surrounded by 120 men and women who were filled with the Holy Spirit. About him was a spiritual atmosphere created by a consecrated congregation. Unless we are willing to pay the price of prayer, daily, prayer for the advancement of God's work, for the saving unto salvation and service of our own soul, for the success and soul-recreation of other men, beginning with those men and women we do not like, and who do not like us, unless we put prayer before talk, prayer before food or sleep, we need expect no revival to come close to us.

A revival will cost the best of our time. We cannot give the best of our

a more imperative need for Christian leaders and servants of the Most High God. Every day's newspaper and every radio broadcast conspires to press the need upon us. Let each of us resolve that we at once, without a word, will rise up and follow Christ.

MID-WEEK SERMON

THEME: ***Extinct Volcanoes.***

TEXT: Acts 1:17.

Disraeli's description of some of the elder statesmen of his day: "Extinct volcanoes." Once there was fire, heat, light. Dead enthusiams. Judas: his early enthusiasm had burned out.

The Unfulfilled Promise: Judas, no doubt, was as sincere and enthusiastic in the beginning as the others. The failure of Jesus to start a revolution cooled him off. He lacked vision and patience. John Everett Millais, in old age, stood long before his earlier paintings. "I didn't paint so badly in those days," he said.

The Personal Element: Dominating desire shown by what he did with the proceeds of the betrayal. "Obtained a field"—an estate in the country, a farm. So he "was numbered with us," not "of us." Einstein: "I am rarely enthusiastic about what the League of Nations has done or has not done, but I am always thankful it exists." That is the attitude that has killed the League. A similar attitude hampers the Church.

Retaining The Vision: Deepen allegiance to Christ. He instituted the Communion as a remembrance to help us deepen our allegiance. Give active service. "Some people in church look like guests at a royal banquet, who couldn't afford to be left out, but have been forbidden by their doctor to eat anything."—W. R. Maltbie. Judas brooding and moping and complaining. Peter swinging a sword; foolish but indicative of attitude. Peter denied his Lord but returned in penitence. Judas betrayed Christ and destroyed himself.

TOPICS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE'S SOCIETIES

CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR: Y. P.—Ways to Peace. Christian Missions as a Way to Peace. Rom. 10:8-15. Matt. 28:19-20.
Jr.—Appreciating our Gifts. How the Blind are Helped to See. John 9:1-12.
WALTHER LEAGUE: November Topic, Education (Colleges). How to Choose a College? Discuss Reasons. Aim of College Course.

FOR THE BULLETIN BOARD

Men, like rivers, are crooked from following the low places.
Over-abundance of kindness has never been plowed under.
Religion is apt to be snowed under in the hottest weather.
Face the sun and the shadow is always behind you.
Worship removes worry.
Why deny the hour to develop your best self?
The non-church goer makes the non-going church.

NOVEMBER, SECOND SUNDAY

CALL TO WORSHIP: "Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God abideth in him, and he in God."
PSALM: 93.
PRELUDE: Sunrise—*Diggle.*
ANTHEM: Sing Unto God—*Dunham.*
OFFERTORY: Berceuse—*Kinder.*
POSTLUDE: Fanfare—*Dubois.*
OFFERTORY SENTENCE: "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called children of God."
OFFERTORY PRAYER: No middle ground is satisfactory to Thee, for Thy love is boundless in its depth and care of Thy Children, and we await the strength and understanding for response satisfactory to Thee. Teach us how to love Thee; teach us how to love those about us, not with a selfish attitude of personal aggrandizement, but with a divine love of understanding and sacrifice. We await Thy coming into our hearts. Make us like Thee. We ask in Jesus' Name. Amen.
BENEDICTION: The grace of God be with you, now and forever. Amen.

SERMONS

THEME: *The Bible and the War.*

GEORGE WELLS ARMS, D. D.

TEXT: Jeremiah 6:14.
HYMNS: "Peace, perfect peace, in this dark world . . ."—*Pax Tecum,* 10s.
"We bless Thee for Thy peace . . ."—*Southwell, C. M.*

Of all the prophets of the Old Testament there was none greater than Jeremiah. So great was he that even in our Lord's day it was thought that perhaps Jesus was Jeremiah returned in the flesh. And of all the prophets of the Old Testament there was none more unpopular than Jeremiah. His message was true and all fulfilled to the letter, but its contents was not good news. The prophet of gloom they called him, and they would have killed him, except that they feared he might be right. Their reasoning was that they preferred to have good news and have it false, rather than to have bad news and have it true. And of all the prophets of the Old Testament there was none whose times were so like our own and none whose message is so needed as that of Jeremiah. It was he who said, "They cry, Peace, peace; when there is no peace." Because they were God's chosen people they imagined they had certain exemptions, and therefore were living in a false sense of security. They were the so-called Christian nations of our day set over against the pagan nations of their own day—they basked in a false pacifism. To such Jeremiah preached to mend their ways; and with a bleeding heart and a fountain of tears he preached repentance, and that their hope was in God. From such he received only scoffing and mockery. Finally, the words of the prophet came true. Nebuchadnezzar, the pagan king, came down from the north, laid their city and land and temple waste, carried them into captivity, and established his world empire. What was true of Israel then is true of ourselves now. We have been

Living in a Fool's Paradise

We have been boasting of our own self-sufficiency, that we are a great people, with all natural resources, bounded on the east by one ocean and on

the west by another, with England and France to act as our shock absorbers, we, a "Christian nation" as over against the pagan nations, confident that "it can't happen here," and crying, "Peace, peace; when there is no peace."

But men cannot establish peace. Only God can do that. He has announced, "that there is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked," but "the wicked are like the troubled sea, for it cannot rest, and its waters cast up mire and dirt." (Isaiah 57:20-21.) The basis and foundations of peace are righteousness, and to try and establish peace without righteousness is like endeavoring to build on quicksand.

This is a Day of Failure

Man has failed; civilization has failed; democracy has failed; Protestantism has failed. That is gloom and that is pessimism, and it is no more popular than the preaching of Jeremiah, but it is just as true.

Man has failed, and when we say man, we mean civilized man, man who has given us the greatest inventive age in history, whose inventions have turned out to be a Frankenstein; man who through medicine has raised to new heights the average age of man and then has poured out his blood like rivers. This is a wonderful, enlightened age, they say. But enlightened by what? By man's own intellect? Certainly not by the Light of the World; for man has put that Light out; and "If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!" (Matthew 6:23.) Yes, with all of our enlightenment, how great is that darkness!

Strange as it may seem, this present condition has been born of destructive criticism, born in Germany about 100 years ago. Luther gave Germany the Bible in her own tongue and made her the great people which she later became, many of her emigrants becoming our finest citizens and homemakers. Then her universities began to turn out a subtle learning which blasted the very foundations on which she stood. The Bible which Luther gave her and with it her faith was ploughed under. The soil was then left ready for any sowing and the seed which fell upon it was Nietzsche's philosophy. This became the new philosophy of a generation that knew not Joseph, the philosophy of Nazism—that might is right and Christianity is wrong; full of blasphemies against the faith once for all delivered unto the saints; letting loose on the face of the earth a scourge with demoniacal aim to crush all minorities and liberties and the determination to rule or die. Of course in saying these things we know there are always individual exceptions, and in all of this we are speaking in a general summary. Germany still has some of the finest Christians that ever lived, most of whom, however, are in concentration camps.

But these germs of criticism did not end with Germany. They took root in England, France and America. We sent our sons to German gymnasiums for "more learning," to have many return to us with this same subtlety of destruction and again would plough under the Book which gave us our liberties and birth, leaving the soil here ready for any seed that might fall. The seed was a false—an imitation Christianity. We might call it Unitarianism, except that the denomination which bears that name has not spread, the reason being that there has been no cause for its teachings to spread, since

it flourishes sufficiently within the bounds of Protestantism. As a substitute religion it has given us a false sense of security, trusting in the progress of evolution rather than in God; a false brotherhood, built upon a mere flesh and blood animal foundation (which is no more a brotherhood than the jungle) rather than built on re-birth and our Elder Brother, Jesus Christ; a false pacifism, based on man's good-will, which he doesn't seem to have, rather than ordered lives that secure God's good-will.

The result has been that with no eternal Word to which to turn, one great group of people has been building up a philosophy of destruction, while another great group of people, having likewise forsaken the infallible Rule of Faith and Practice, has found itself hood-winked by a philosophy of a mock Christianity. Unprepared morally and materially, they have seen the cyclone coming but refused to believe it was coming, crying, "Peace, peace; when there is no peace."

Democracy Has Failed

Democracy as we have experienced it and seen its promise has been born out of the centuries from the principles of God's Book. It began with the Magna Charta and Bill of Rights and came into full bloom in our own Declaration of Independence and Constitution. The Protestant nations became the great nations. Individual morality and the sense of individual responsibility to God became the backbone of these peoples. The Church became the builder of schools in order that all might read the Word of God, and the founder of colleges that her sons might be educated ministers of the Word. But the liberty brought forth turned into license, with every man claiming the right to do "that which was right in his own eyes." The colleges turned their sons and daughters against the very source that gave them birth and destroyed the inheritance which they had received from their founders, which was again to blast the Book. Our youth was taught that the priceless freedom which we enjoy was purchased by the blood of our fathers but that, as far as we are concerned, it was not worth pouring out our own blood to keep. Democracy became a kind of *laissez faire.* The more able (?) preferred to keep out of politics and let the other fellow run the country. God was put into the discard. In the light of this, what right then have we now to cry unto God to "save democracy," if democracy gives Him no more recognition than totalitarianism; and should He save it, what expectation would He have that democracy would use its freedom to enthrone Him? If we will not use the liberty which we have to come to Him, then do not let us cry unto Him to maintain it. If we mean we will use our liberty to put Him first, then the first sign that we will thus use our liberty is REPENTANCE.

Protestantism Has Failed

I am not saying the Church has failed. The true Church will never fail and "the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Persecution can never stamp it out.

> "O where are kings and empires now
> Of old that went and came?
> But, Lord, Thy Church is praying yet,
> A thousand years the same."

But Protestantism, as a movement, has never brought forth to completion. Protestantism never became missionary in spreading its Good News, except for the little band of Moravians, until about 100 years ago, beginning with William Carey and the Hay Stack Movement. But even then it never brought forth unto perfection. Missions have always been unpopular. Protestantism never sacrificed and bled to send out her own sons and daughters. She preferred to be bourgeoisie rather than poor; she never even gave her tithes, as a people, and the Lord's work was carried on largely from the crumbs that fell from her table.

Protestantism never progressed in those great doctrines that bind hearts together and build up in the faith, but sought unity rather by peeling down her faith. Protestantism as a movement finally denied her Magna Charta and seat of authority, the Holy Bible, telling her followers, "It is a great book, but after all you cannot depend upon it." Modern learning may be right and the Bible may be wrong, but if "by their fruits ye shall know them," I prefer the Bible.

We are living in a day of failure and

A Day of Judgment

Have we come to the breaking up of the nations and the end of the age; and in our extremity do we blame God? "Why does He allow all this?" we hear on every side. But why blame God, when it is we who have forsaken Him? God has not failed—we have failed. We have turned His Sabbaths into holidays; we have forsaken His churches; we have tabooed His Bible; we do not even pray—we have cut every cord that ties us to God, and then we blame Him!

God is righteous and judgment must fall. "I have spoken unto you, rising up early and speaking, but ye have not hearkened—therefore thus saith the Lord of Hosts; because ye have not heard my words, behold, I will send and take all the families of the north, saith the Lord, and Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, my servant, and will bring them against this land, and against the inhabitants thereof, and against all these nations round about, and will utterly destroy them, and make them an astonishment, and an hissing, and perpetual desolations.—And it shall come to pass, when seventy years are accomplished, that I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, saith the Lord, for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans; and will make it perpetual desolations." (Jeremiah 25:3-12.)

The way God punishes nations is with other nations. Here He picks out the pagan Babylonian to smite His own people! He calls Nebuchadnezzar "my servant," not in the sense that Nebuchadnezzar is a follower of the Lord, for Nebuchadnezzar does not even know he is chosen for this thing, but "my instrument;" and after that He will punish the king. In this sense Hitler may be called "my servant,"—we do not know—and God will also take care of him for his atrocities, and "If any shall refuse to take the cup (of His chastening), thus saith the Lord, ye shall surely drink it." (Jeremiah 25:28.) To prevent all these things from happening the prophet cried out with a bleeding heart, "Return ye now every one from his evil way." (Jeremiah 25:5.)

Under date of May 12, 1940, the Commission on International Justice and Good Will of the Brooklyn Church and Mission Federation, says:

"We recoil from the thought of the invasion of England for instance. We shudder at the possibility of the destruction of its capital. But by what law or upon what principle should it be thought that Great Britain should forever escape? Great Britain has invaded many a land. She has bombarded many a capital. Shall we be naive enough to believe that there shall never be a day of reckoning for England?"

We are naive enough to think that there will be no day of reckoning for America, who has broken covenant with her Indians, who has supplied Japan with the great bulk of her war material for the destruction of China, who took by conquest Texas, larger than all Europe! Our hands are not free from blood.

"When thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness." (Isaiah 26:9.)

Twenty-Second Sunday After Trinity.

THEME: *Yesterday, Today, and For Ever.*

HUGH THOMSON KERR, D. D.

TEXT: "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today, yea and for ever." Hebrews 13:8.

HYMNS: "All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name. . . ."—*Miles Lane, C. M.*
"O For a thousand tongues to sing. . . ."—*Dedham, C. M.*

Here is a man writing in the first century of things that seem to be happening today. The old order had disappeared and there was no new order to hope for.

Who of us can look out upon our world unmoved? We see the ruthless anti-God forces of the world supreme in Europe, breaking down the inherited religious customs of centuries. It seems to be an era of nihilism, an epoch of sheer destruction characterized by violence, brutality and disregard for all those virtues which we had thought established; and we stand helpless. A moral protest on our part counts for nothing, for it is meaningless to those who have discarded morals and believe only in action, in godless dynamism, the destruction of all those things that have been conserved and the casting out of everything our fathers held dear.

It is not change that we oppose. Change is inevitable. It is inconceivable that the boundaries and borders of nations should stay as they are today. We cannot say that the frontiers will be the same ten or twenty or fifty years from now. We do not look for a changeless world. We do, however, look for a time when boundaries and frontiers may be changed without resorting to violence and by some other method than that of force. But like this writer to the bewildered Jews of his generation we, too, seem to hear a voice saying, "I care for nothing. All shall go." And we ask the question, "Does anything stand? Is there anything that is abiding?" This is the question the author of the epistle to the Hebrews asked and he answered it. He said, that the things that cannot be shaken belong to the kingdom of God. This

kingdom of God, which enshrines within its keeping the spiritual values we hold dear abides. And before he closes his message to his bewildered people he again says, "Yes, there is something that stands. There is something that abides. Jesus Christ abides. He is the same yesterday, today, and for ever." Now this is an amazing statement because it is not some institution or organization or civilization upon which he founds his hope. It is upon a personality. Now personality of all values seems to fade and pass away. Robert Browning gives us his picture of the patriot who was applauded and crowned with laurel wreaths.

> "It was roses, roses, all the way,
> With myrtle mixed in my path like mad;
> The house-roofs seemed to heave and sway,
> The church spires flamed, such flags they had,
> A year ago on this very day."

And then the poet goes on to say "There's nobody on the house-tops now." The period of hero worship had passed and instead of the reward it was the penalty, and instead of the praise, blame was meted out.

That has been the course of history. The great names of the past become blurred and forgotten. Jesus, however, abides. Every day we speak His name. Every week we sing His praise and once every year all the bells in all the cities of the world sound out His praise. What a miracle that is! He abides the same yesterday, today, and for ever.

He abides as the *standard and norm of personal character*. That is something to think about. We remember that He was born and lived His life more than nineteen hundred years ago. He grew up in a provincial atmosphere. His environment was local. He had not the advantages of a college education. He was restricted in His reading and in His contacts. He was not even like Paul trained in the wisdom of his generation. He did not attend the University of Alexandria or of Athens, both of which were flourishing in His day. The people who heard Him said, "How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?" If He was cast up upon the shores of time, the product of the ebb and flow of the evolutionary forces of history, then we ought to be producing better men in our colleges and universities. Our young men have better advantages, are in touch with what we call a "spiritual culture" and have advantages of heredity and environment. We ought to be producing in our schools of learning better men than Jesus, if He can be accounted for through the time influences of His own day. Yet there He stands, the moral standard of our advanced civilization. The moral ideals of men change from century to century. Once Samson and his athletic prowess was the ideal. Once Solomon and his wisdom charmed and allured the whole world. Once the warrior was called great and we speak of Cyrus the Great, and Alexander the Great, and Caesar the Great, and Peter the Great. But we do not so classify Jesus. Once the children of France voted almost unanimously for Napoleon as the exemplar of all that was great; but today we are told that another name comes into the contest and that Pasteur, the healer, the man who turned science to the uses of humanity, crowds out the name of Napoleon. These changes in the

moral standards of life seem to be inevitable. But the moral standard exemplified by Jesus abides, and today He seems to be far beyond us, calling to us from the moral heights of His own personal character and saying, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me."

Then again, when we think of it, He abides the same yesterday, and today, and for ever *in His influence*. He wrote no book. He composed no music. He organized no system of thought. He established no institution; and yet there is no corner in the world today that is not under His influence. Even when that influence is denied, it is still present. Why should He be hated and denounced by the anti-God movement in Russia and Germany? Why should He be so antagonized by those who deny His claim? It is because His influence is a living thing and His presence is still potent, even among those who deny Him. Recently the President of the world's Baptist Association, interviewing the Minister of Education in Russia, found himself checkmated by anti-Christian antagonism. And then this Minister outlined to him his own ideals. Christianity, he said, was outmoded and the time had come to give every man a fair chance in the world, and that there should be concern for the under-privileged, and that men should not live for themselves but for others. Dr. Rushbrook interrupting him said, "Where did you get those ideals? Those ideals come directly from Jesus Christ, from His teaching and His life." It is even so. It is He who sits in judgment with the judge on the bench. He is with the teacher at the desk in the school. He is with the woman who goes out into society. He occupies a place in the office of the business man. He speaks to statesmen in regard to international affairs. Invisible He is and silent, and yet His voice is heard. He influences public opinion and when men transgress in speech or literature, it is He who condemns; and when men are inspired to noble deeds and high living, it is He who approves.

Furthermore, He abides as *the world's Saviour*. "Thou shalt call his name JESUS; for he shall save his people from their sins." He saves men from sin, from fear, from frustration not because there is magic in His method but because of who He is. That is the Christmas message. The Christmas message is that God has come near to men. He has visited and redeemed His people, redeemed them and lifted them up. Clarence Darrow, whose name is only a memory and now unknown even to youth, once said, "You can make nothing of man but man selfish, mean, tyrannical, aggressive. That's what man is and a lot more. It is useless to try to change him." That seems a true verdict. When we let man alone there is something of the wolf and the tiger and the fox let loose upon the world. We see what man is when we see what he can do to the defenseless cities of China and to the thousands of innocent women and children who have suffered from brutality and violence. We see what man is and can do, when unrestrained by the grace of God, in the desolation of Poland and Abyssinia and in the conscienceless and brutal aggression that has brought suffering and death to Finland. That is what man can do, and man knows his own helplessness. "The flowers and fruits of love are gone." Who said that? Byron said that and Byron was a profligate. "Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player, that struts

and frets his hour upon the stage." Who said that? A murderer by the name of Macbeth. Man is like that when he is left to himself. When God visits him and redeems him through Christ, he is a different being. Notwithstanding the slogan that human nature cannot be changed, human nature is changed. Men are redeemed, saved, visited by God and lifted up into fellowship with the things of the spirit. "Now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be." It is a man that is speaking. Once he was a fisherman. Once he called down fire out of heaven upon the innocent inhabitants of a neighboring city, but now he is redeemed. "I can do all things through Christ." Who said that? A man who once was a murderer, a blasphemer but who was lifted up by the love of Christ and redeemed. "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and for ever." Who said that? We do not know his name but in the midst of a falling world, a shaken world, a world that broke his heart, he asserted that Christ stood like the unmovable mountains, sure, steadfast, abiding, the same yesterday, and today, and for ever. "All hail the power of Jesus' name." Who said that? The son of a French refugee who had inherited a faith that was unshaken and unshakable. Some years ago I heard the carillon of the Mayo Clinic out in the wide stretches of Minnesota one Sunday morning sounding out this same message, "All hail the power of Jesus' name." It was an amazing message sent forth from a tower dedicated to the achievements of science. There is no other word that you could put there but the name of Jesus. You would not sing or think of singing "All hail the power of science's name." "All hail the power of politics' name," or "finance's name," or "All hail the name of the sword." We do not sing about the sword. But we do sing about Jesus, the same yesterday, and today, and for ever, because He has visited and redeemed His people and is able to save unto the uttermost. His hand goes down as deep as hell and lifts men up as high as heaven. Do we believe that? Can we trust him? Can you men, who are in the swift flowing currents of business, hold fast to the unshaken reality of the Lord Jesus Christ? Can we all, in the midst of a bewildered and shaken world, put our feet down and stand upon that rock, the rock of our salvation? Can we stand up and look into the mirror of life every morning and every night and say to our souls, "I believe in God, I believe in Jesus, the same yesterday and today, yea and for ever."

PRAYER

Grant us, Heavenly Father, the privilege of fellowship with Thee and Thy loved ones in Christ. Help us to overcome our timidity and our indifference, help us to rise above the meanness of spirit that keeps us apart from the truly great in spirit.

Help us to realize that nothing is real and permanent but that which Thou hast made to endure. Help us to understand our kinship with Thee, so that we may depart ourselves as children of Thine. We ask in Jesus' Name. Amen.

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

Repentance and Faith.

LESSON: Isa. 1:10-20; Ezek. 18:20-23; Luke 3:1-14; 13:1-5; 15:11-24; Acts 2:37-39; Rom. 6:1-11. Print Luke 15:11-24.

GOLDEN TEXT: "Repent ye, and believe in the gospel." Mark 1:15.

DEVOTIONAL READING: Psalm 32:1-5.

INTER. & SR. TOPIC: What It Means to Repent and Believe.

Y. P. & ADULTS: Salvation through Repentance and Faith.

Sin is a frenzy in the imagination, a poison in the heart, an opiate in the will, a madness in the brain. It was when the Prodigal Son "came to himself" that he arose and went to his father. The story is one of the most beautiful of all the parables of Christ. It contains the very essence of the Gospel, the good news which Christ came to bring us. Someone has called it "the pearl of the parables." When the Prodigal Son was lost to himself he was also lost to his father. The portion which the younger son asked was one third of the estate. According to Deut. 21:17, the older son would have two thirds. Notice that there is no hesitancy on the part of the father in complying with the request. This may teach us that when we elect to break away from our proper relations with God and to assert our own independence of Him we are free to do so. God does not, indeed He cannot, constrain our wills. We have the power to defy him. We have this power which nothing else in God's universe has. The planets swing on an orbit appointed by Him. The stars are held in their places according to His will.

It is only man, puny, weak man, who can stand up and defy God to His face. In one of the most beautiful parables which Jesus ever spoke, that of the Lost Sheep, He said, "And *if so be* that he find it." Is it possible for the shepherd *not* to find his sheep? Is it possible for the Infinite God to go hunting for a man and *fail* to find him? Indeed it is. A man may bury himself in his own self-will, hiding himself in the darkness of the cavern of defiance of God and so prevent the Infinite Shepherd from finding him. God cannot force or compel obedience or love. If love and obedience are *forced* they would be without value. Indeed, love would cease to be love if it were forced. The younger son gathered all that was necessary for his journey and went forth. He lived for the world, and every man who lives for the world and not for God is wasting his powers. He spent more than his money. He spent his health, his self-respect, his peace of mind, his character, everything that he had, and there in that far-off country he found famine. Every far-off country is a land of famine. The richest man on earth without Christ is famished. "Abundance" is God's word and "want" is Satan's word. When he had reached his last extremity he became a servant. He had scorned his father and he is now to become a slave. The feeding of swine in the East was the most despised of all vocations. Not only did the Jews so consider it but the Egyptians also. It was a very different thing from tending sheep which Jacob and Moses and David did. That was an honorable occupation but the Orientals have a proverb, "Cursed is he who feeds the swine."

Finally, when he knew that he was not worthy to be called a son he realized how great a title it was and longed with all his heart to have it applied to him. In spite of the devil's temptation to remain, reminding him of the disgrace of going home in that condition, urging him to put it off until his appearance was better, putting doubts into mind as to his father's reception of him, the Prodigal had some sense left and knew that it was then or never. He set against the devil's crafty suggestion his own sturdy I WILL. It is not sufficient for the mind to possess a purpose. The purpose must possess the mind. The Prodigal had come to himself but he had not yet come to his father. If the road to Hell is paved with good intentions so also is the road to the Father's House. The young man was driven on by a resolute resolve to go to his father. Here are repentance and faith combined in saving power. Just so our Father will receive every penitent soul that comes to him, it matters not how forlorn we have been in the far-country, nor what we have done there. His eye is watching for us, His hands of mercy are outstretched to us; His tender heart yearns over us. He will receive every one of His sons and daughters with the same tender, compassionate forgiveness as the father received this boy in the Saviour's story. Repentance and faith still lead to Heaven.

EVENING SERMON

THEME: ***After the Flood.***

FRED SMITH, D. D.

TEXT: "And Noah lived after the flood three hundred and fifty years." Gen. 9:28.

Merely to state the fact contained in our text is enough to arouse one's curiosity and many questions. Three hundred and fifty years is a long time for any man to live. In fact it is longer than any man seems to be able to live in these days. Our health statisticians tell us that the expectancy of life is now continually on the increase. But none of them, so far as I know, have offered to the modern man an expectancy of three hundred and fifty years. But when we add to the number three hundred and fifty years an additional six hundred then the measure of it becomes all the more amazing. Yet that is the number that the Scripture gives as to the length of time that Noah lived before the flood. Nine hundred and fifty years is a long span of time for a man to live.

Between the length of life as it is now lived and the length of life as it is imputed to the patriarchs there is quite a difference. It has sent many inquirers questing the reason of it. I mention this here in order to say that this is not our quest. To discover the reason for this difference of length of existence between then and now would be interesting and informational. It would mean a gain for scientific knowledge. All this would be to the good. But our purpose is otherwise today. In our text there is a fact of great spiritual worth for our time. It is this that I wish you to get. Then, if for good measure, you desire to go after the facts that have scientific worth, well and good. For us I propose to go the length of the search that brings

for our searching the reward of the spiritual worth of this statement which is our text. In it there is much to arouse our curiosity. But more than that there is much that will strengthen our Christianity. In these days of flood tide catastrophe we need the latter more than the former of the two things I have just mentioned.

"And Noah lived after the flood three hundred and fifty years." The mere fact that he survived and why is a story all by itself. Our interest today lies in the fact that he survived the flood by three hundred and fifty years. On two counts Noah has the right to our admiration and remembrance. The first: the flood did not drown him. The second: the after effects of the flood did not down him. Many a man can win the first lap of catastrophe, but not all men win the second. Noah did both.

Compare him, if you will with Job, for contrast. Job lived in a world that went all to pieces in another sort of way. He won the first round. There he stood, magnificent in a world that was going to pot. But what disaster could not do his mistaken friends achieved for him. He wanted to stand up to God, but his friends told him to cringe to Him. They said to him: "Be a yes man to God." And Job would have none of their counsellings. Therefore he cursed God. Then, at the long last, when the hot air of the counselling friends had given out, God spoke to the exhausted Job. And he came back to strength and sanity and lived one hundred and forty years. He made a come-back too.

In the experience of both of these men there is something for many people in our troubled times. The special meaning of the come-back of Job I will leave for you to work at yourself. I want today to concentrate on Noah. Consider him. To me he stands in the fore front of the world's reformers. Do you remember the first thing he did after descending from the ark? He cleaned up a corner of the earth, took "of every clean beast and every clean fowl" and made a sweet savor unto God.

Many people get the first significance of that act but not the final worth of it. The first is, of course, that of exuberant and spontaneous praise. Noah was glad he could put his foot on solid earth again. But wait a minute. I wonder if the earth was as solid on his exit from the ark as it afterwards became? Let us give, as the word is today, a realistic glance at it as Noah and his family step from the ark. If you have ever happened to walk over a flood devastated area immediately after the waters have receded you know what I mean. The muck and the mess of it! The stench of it! And if the land happens to be yours, who do you become? Hamlet? Do you say: "Woe is me, the tides are out of joint, and I am sent to clean up the mess?" Or do you sit upon the dung hill and act like Job? Or do you act like Noah?

In that hour of sacrifice to God notice that Noah did two things with regard to God. He gave God of his praise and also of his pity. It is the second thing that many people never see in this episode. Noah sent a sweet fragrance right away to God. In that act he started the world to a new chapter of cleanliness. Over and above the dank stenches of a recently flooded earth, Noah sent a fragrance of loveliness. And in that act he dramatized all that all the reformers of the world who have come after

him can ever do. This is the end of all reform to make a world that smells sweet to God.

That is to say, Noah did not sit down and whine and wail. He set to work. The detailed story of the next three hundred and fifty years is not told to us. But the fact of the world of today indicates that Noah and his posterity got the best of the flood. Noah himself was not all that he should have been in that restoration. But to remember Noah or any man for his weaknesses only is to reveal a weakness in our own mind. The way of remembrance should be to remember men for *our good,* not for their weakness or wickedness, except as this last remembrance helps the first.

So let us remember Noah for *our good.* We are living in a world that has been deluged with major catastrophe. As I write these words it looks as if civilization itself is headed for a black-out. Men are asking fearfully: "What of tomorrow?" To many this question comes in its own specific way. It may come in a way like to the way it came to Job. Personal calamity wrecks all our cherished dreams and achievements. What then? That is the question. What is the answer?

Some take the way of death. A piece of rope wound tight around the neck; a revolver with an empty chamber beside a lifeless form tells mutely the answer. Destruction led to despair and the end was death. But that is not the way of Noah. Some never recover after the disaster of calamity. They live, from then on, a living death. Noah could have done this, but he did not. Somewhere he found a spade or made one. He dug into the earth. He started to turn the water logged earth into a garden. He made a vineyard and became a husbandman. Instead of giving way to despair he set himself to digging. In a way other than Emerson he found that "all his hurts his garden spade could heal."

Good old Noah. The floods could not drown nor the aftermath down him. He did not commit suicide. The Bible counts him a saint. Ezekiel calls him one of the three great men of history. The thing that commands my admiration in Noah is not the length of his life, but the strength of his purpose as manifested in the length of it. He looked at the world when the flood had gone back. He saw the muck, the mud and the slime of it. He knew the stench of it. He did not throw up his hands in despair; he dug them into the muck and the mud and slime of things. He started a world wide clean up of things. He lived by faith teamed up to work before the flood and also after it. For days like these I commend to you the example of Noah in this regard.

MID-WEEK SERMON

THEME: ***Change Your Mind.***

TEXT: Acts 2:38.

Here is the first question in the history of Christian preaching. And the answer is in the words of John and Jesus: "Repent!"

Repentance: The word has little force today. It is worn smooth with use and repetition. It is theological, to many people, and has nothing to do with practical living, with choices and decisions. It often implies a judicial

process: "Get right with God." It looks backward. It goes against our confidence in ourselves, in our ability to rectify our own mistakes. It hurts our pride.

Change Your Mind: "Mend your ways and your doings." It becomes practical, of the present day. It ceases to be merely backward looking, and points us forward. A changed mind means a changed direction of life. It is still hard. It does mean admission of wrong-doing on our part, wrong-thinking, wrong-desiring. But it is not merely an emotional upset. It is the acquisition of a new instrument for the directing of life, a new mind.

Consider Some Examples: From the ministry of our Lord. The Rich Young Ruler: possessed by his wealth and therefore not of much use in meeting the need of the world. The Prodigal Son: filled with desire for "living," for having a good time. Woke up deserted in his poverty. A vision of his Father's household; the work was hard, but they lived well. He found a new definition of living, a new mind. The Good Samaritan: the brotherhood of man. But how deep does it go with us? We believe with our conscious mind that God is good and that men are brothers, but only if we plan and act toward God and man in the truth of them, will our subconscious mind believe them. Change your mind.

TOPICS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE'S SOCIETIES

CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR: Y. P.—Christian Youth at Work for Peace. Isa. 11:1-9.
Jr.—How the Deaf and Dumb are Helped to Hear and Talk. Mark 7:31-37.

WALTHER LEAGUE: November Topic, Education (Colleges). Discuss advantages of Christian Colleges, from personal, character, and general points of view as compared with secular and state schools. Compare attitude of faculties toward the individual needs of students.

FOR THE BULLETIN BOARD

A new day, a new opportunity.
Reason does not sanction the same mistake habitually.
We have taken our hats off long enough. Let's try the coats now.
The one who fears to begin is lower than the quitter.
Do you stay away from the club because its members are not all perfect?
It is true, the best people are church people.
The miles are shortened when you walk with good company.
You can never get lost on the straight road.

FOR THE BULLETIN BOARD

No fence around the church as high as laziness.
The willing horse gets not only the heaviest load but the most oats.
What God wants you to do, He will help you to do.
Wild oats need no cultivation.
You realize your mistakes. Try to realize on them.
There is a world of difference between sanctimoniousness and saintliness.
There is no such thing as a little sin.
Desire, more than distance, keeps some from the family pew.
General Apathy still leads his mighty army.

NOVEMBER, THIRD SUNDAY

CALL TO WORSHIP: "So then, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh, for if ye live after the flesh, ye must die, but if by the Spirit ye put to death the deeds of the body, ye shall live."

PSALM: 33.

PRELUDE: Andante Piacevale—*Halsey.*

ANTHEM: The Heavens Are Declaring—*Beethoven.*

OFFERTORY: Melodie—*Massenet.*

POSTLUDE: Erbs Beata—*Le Jeune.*

OFFERTORY SENTENCE: "Blessed is he that considereth the poor, the Lord will deliver him in time of trouble."

OFFERTORY PRAYER: Heavenly Father, rest our hearts and hopes in Thee. Save us from the bitterness of selfish motives and sinking of hopes. Speed the day when we shall find joy in Thy service, and hope in brotherly love. Accept these our earthly tokens of our faith in Thy goodness.

BENEDICTION: "Now the Lord of peace Himself give you peace at all times in all ways. The Lord be with you all."

SERMONS

THEME: *The Soul of the Gospel. (Missionary.)*

HAROLD E. CARLSON, D. D.

TEXTS: "Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." Romans 3:24.

"I beseech you, therefore, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service." Romans 12:1.

HYMNS: "Jesus shall Reign where'er the Sun . . ."—*Duke St. L. M.*

"Thou Whose Almighty Word . . ."—*Italian Hymn,* 6, 6, 4, 6, 6, 6, 4.

I

The juxtaposition of these two verses from Paul's Letter to The Romans has interest in two respects. First, the former passage is the very kernel of thought in the first eleven chapters of the Epistle to the Romans. The latter passage contains the heart of the thought of the concluding chapers of this Letter. Just as the word "smokestacks" epitomizes Pittsburgh, or "schools" the city of Boston, or "railroads" Chicago, "banks" New York, "tobacco" Louisville, or "flour" Minneapolis, so the Cross of Christ epitomizes the character of God. It is the love of God for men that is epitomized in the Cross of Christ which is the central theme of Paul's first eleven chapters of the Epistle to the Romans. On the other hand, it is the reciprocal love of men to God that is the leading thought of the concluding chapters of the Letter.

The heart of the Gospel is the atoning sacrifice of Christ; its life and power is the loving sacrifice of men. The truth of the Gospel is the fact of the unmerited mercy of God; the soul of the Gospel is the reciprocal love of men. The heart of the Gospel is the fact of the Cross of Christ, but the Gospel, like a human being, is spiritually dead without a soul. The Gospel is as dead so long as it does not impel men redeemed to Christ to broadcast the love of God over a needy world. When men are brought to believe that Christ died that they should no longer live unto themselves but unto Him, the Gospel throbs with life and is really a soul. Human beings are, therefore, the blood that makes the heart of the Gospel throb with life,

turning it into a living soul. And only they form the blood-stream to the heart of the Gospel who live by faith in the profound conviction that they have been "justified by the grace of God through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus"—who have been turned from a life of self-seeking to a life of service. George Eliot says somewhere: "Neither heaven nor earth has any revelation until some personality touches ours with a peculiar influence, subduing it into receptiveness." Those who have been touched by the Personality of the Master are they who form the life-giving blood to the heart of the Gospel. For they live as they sing:

> "Were the whole realm of nature mine,
> That were a present far too small;
> Love so amazing, so divine,
> Demands my soul, my life, all."

The soul of the Gospel is, therefore, "the expulsive power of a new affection" which is grounded in the conviction of the indebtedness of men to God in Christ. The men and women down through the centuries who have made the Gospel throb with life have always been those whose devotion and loyalty to God was to be "a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God which they conceived to be their reasonable service." They have always realized a sense of the free gift of salvation and this has expressed itself in a deep sense of obligation. As they have loved so have they lived.

It was a personal love for a personal Saviour that sent Paul forth to tell the Good News to the Gentiles, burdened all the while with the conviction, "Woe unto me if I preach not the Gospel." *Because* he had been "justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus," Father Damien went forth to present himself a living sacrifice as his reasonable service to suffering lepers; Paton went to the cannibals of the South Sea Islands; Morrison went to China; and Livingstone to Africa, and Grenfell to Labrador. It was simply because men have keenly realized that God has first loved us that they have in return presented themselves a living sacrifice which they conceived to be their reasonable service. William Carey, sitting in his dingy cobbler shop in England, one day looked up at his faded and dirty map of the world on the wall before him. He was imbued with the conviction that he must present himself a living sacrifice because of his redemption through Christ Jesus, believed in India for Christ and went forth to evangelize India as his reasonable service. Whitefield, utilizing the last bit of strength he could muster preached a last message to a crowd at Newburyport while on the way to his rooming place, and then went upstairs to die. Why? Because he believed profoundly that he had been justified by faith freely, and therefore, must give himself freely which was his reasonable service. John Wesley, riding more miles for the Master than any other man probably has ridden in a saddle, gave all that he had of money and energy and time, and at the last left, as a biographer says, "a good library, a well-worn clergyman's gown, a much abused reputation, and the Methodist Church." Marcus Whitman, and his equally heroic wife, the first white woman to cross the continent, were the forerunners of Christian civilization in the Northwest. Because they were imbued with the conviction beyond the shadow of a doubt that they had been freely justified, therefore, they

were willing to endure unbelievable hardships and perils as their reasonable service.

All these examples of great missionaries simply reveal that the missionary impulse and spirit is a matter of personal love for a personal Saviour. Whether a man or a woman goes out upon the missionary field, or supports missionary work as a layman, the vital question is that which the Master asked Peter for his ordination: "Lovest thou Me?" Without this personal love the Gospel lacks the blood of redeeming life and power. "There are just two needs to evangelize the world," said a social worker the other day. "What are they?" asked a devoted churchman. "Compulsory sanitation and universal education," was his reply. "Has it ever occurred to you," replied the churchman, "that these very needs are but the ammunition of the Church of Christ which cannot be given the world without the dynamic of love." Christ cannot conquer in the world if He is defeated in the lives of His individual disciples. Whenever the Church has failed it has always been a failure of love.

II

Because we have been justified freely through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, therefore, we ought to present ourselves a living sacrifice which is our reasonable service.

One reason for such service is that through our efforts we share in redeeming a needy world and at the same time save ourselves. Not so long ago a newspaper related the incident of a man lost in the woods of Canada. It was bitterly cold and he was growing numb. In the distance was a lumber camp. But the man was just ready to lay down in a snow drift and freeze to death. As he stooped to lay down he stumbled over something in the snow. He scratched about and found to his surprise that it was the body of a man. He set about to ascertain whether or not the man was dead and found that his heart was beating faintly. He thereupon set to work to rouse the man and succeeded, but the man's feet were so badly frozen that he could not walk so he put him on his back and carried him to the camp in the distance. By his activity he saved another and at the same time saved his own life. The individual and the Church save their own souls when they give themselves out of love to their Lord to save a needy world.

But we ought to present ourselves a living sacrifice as our reasonable service because we have been justified by Christ for the reason of the need of the world for Christ.

To be a professing follower of Christ is to be imbued with the revelation from on high that the Gospel is "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." (Romans 1:16.) Because life has become richer, fuller, and more abundant to us through Christ, and by no merit of our own, we cannot keep "the unsearchable riches" which have become ours through the Gospel save as we give them to a world of needy men.

"Shall we whose souls are lighted
With wisdom from on high,
Shall we to men benighted
The Lamp of light deny?"

To have little or no passion to share the Gospel with the world of men we

are simply professing that Christ does not mean much to our lives. The Gospel is always "The Good News" to a man when he knows beyond the shadow of a doubt that he has been found by God in Christ. We see demonstrations of the lives of men of different races, and lands, and faiths, that have been marvelously transformed by the same power of the spirit of God which brought His saving grace to us. Such living testimony to the power of God to redeem men everywhere through Christ inspires every true follower of Jesus to carry the Good News to all men. But the true Christian is not prompted by any sense of superiority on his part, but constrained by love to God to share the Good News with the world of men because God first loved him.

How urgent is the task today to share the Gospel with all men! The populations of non-Christian lands are increasing more rapidly than converts are being made. There are possibly 122 millions of people in lands that are not occupied by any Protestant Christian missionaries. In Japan probably two-thirds of the population have not been brought into anything of a living and vital relationship with the Gospel. In China there are more than a thousand cities without a missionary. In Africa, Mohammedanism is pressing its faith upon the peoples. On the present basis of Protestant missionary effort one-third of the people of the world will die without hearing the Good News. Every soul who has been justified through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus knows the spiritual blight and pathetic loss to the millions of men over the world who have not been found by God in Christ.

But territory not cultivated by missionaries is inadequate to describe urgency of the missionary enterprise today. We cannot indicate on a map those vast areas of human relationships over the earth that are uncontrolled by the spirit and principles of Jesus. Our day is a challenge to world fellowship. War is threatening to engulf the entire world. The bitter conflict of nationalisms of our day can be transcended by the principles and conceptions of the Gospel. The sanctity of personality, the Golden Rule, and faith and hope in God are the roads by which the redeemed lead men and nations into a fellowship that transcends all national and racial lines. "There can be neither Jew nor Greek, there can be neither bond nor free, for all are one man in Christ Jesus." (Gal. 3:28.) Our day is crying for men "justified freely through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" who will "present themselves a living sacrifice" to make known to all men "the unsearchable riches" of God. Whenever the Church has been profoundly moved by the "Because" of her faith in Christ, she has hearkened to the "Therefore" of the Apostle and sent forth the Gospel as her "reasonable service."

Twenty-Third Sunday After Trinity.

THEME: *Youth Will Be Served.*

JOHN C. WALKER, D. D.

SCRIPTURE: I Timothy 4:1-7, 12-20.
TEXT: I Timothy 4:12-13.
HYMNS: "Now in the days of youth . . ."—*Diademata, S. M. D.*
"In Life's earnest morning. . . ."—*Morley,* 6 5 6 5, *D.*

I think that you may recall an expression, "Youth must be served!" I be-

lieve that the inference is that sooner or later age must give place to youth, that more particularly in contests on the athletic field or in the sports arena the superior strength and stamina of youth will triumph over the skill and experience of the reigning champion. In sporting competition a man ages quickly or at least he reaches the peak of form at an early age and is usually considered a veteran while still young in years. In the trades and professions men do not reach the high water mark of efficiency until the middle years. There are men in their fifties and sixties or even seventies who are at their very best intellectually and make their finest contribution. But in every walk of life there is valid reason for saying, "Youth must be served!—Youth will be served!"

This is true in the Church of Christ. The leaders of a church are foolish if they think of their church as a closed corporation, a stronghold of middle-aged piety or the sanctities of old age. A well rounded program, a statesmanlike policy in a church takes full account of the interests of the children and the young people. Shrewd businessmen study to forecast the shifts and changes of trade centers of the future. They choose a location not merely on the basis of present trade and traffic, but with due regard to what is likely to be the situation years hence. Youth must be served in the church as in the world at large and we must be mindful of the future.

We ought not to forget the young people and their moral and religious problems. It was always more or less difficult for the younger generation to find a foothold, but we ought to be extremely sympathetic with youth in these distressing times. Some of us remember a rational, ordered, stable world, the world before the war of 1914. Those since that time have never known stable, hopeful, promising conditions. For years past we have had a standing army of unemployed. This burden of unemployment has fallen on two groups, the young and the men in their fifties and sixties.

Edna Ferber in her book, "A Peculiar Treasure" says something very startling on this point. She says that the rich, the powerful, the successful, the failures, the poor, having passed the hilltop of life, with the downward slope ahead of them, have always looked back at youth and said, "How I envy you!—You've got youth. You have the world ahead of you. Youth is the most precious thing in the world. I'd give anything I have for it."—"But now who envies youth?" she asks and then answers her own question, "Not I!" Are you *so* sure you envy youth? "I'm *not* so sure." The signs and portents of the hour are not very encouraging for the average young person either at home or abroad.

The church needs youth with its vigor and enterprise, its candid criticism and its unheeding, sometimes seemingly impractical idealism, its crusading zeal, its enthusiastic loyalties and its gay, adventurous spirit. On the other side youth certainly needs the church, all the more because of the handicaps and disappointments under which it must labor in these days. The church should be the place where young people feel free to turn with their problems and their heartaches. The church must be the rallying point for their finest enthusiasms, the guardian of their ideals, the strength and stay of their growing Christian character.

When we have said all there is to say about the difficulties of these times

and the unfair burden they lay on young people, we must add that by and large this gives them but the greater opportunity to play the nobler role. A little paragraph sermon on a church bulletin board somewhere said, "The world's a wreck. Yes! But here are the materials for a new world!" It isn't so much a question of the times as it is of our courage. Wendell Phillips was one of the bitterest foes slavery ever had and he gave the best years of his life to the cause. In his old age Mr. Phillips one night found an appreciative listener in a young man given to enthusiasm. The younger man drew out the older and this "old man eloquent" told story after story of his perilous and thrilling career as a reformer. At the end when Mr. Phillips rose to go the young man said, "Mr. Phillips, if I had lived in your time, I think I should have been heroic too."—It was a dangerous and foolish thing to say. The old warrior's eyes flashed with indignation, "Young man, you *are* living in my time, and in God's time! Be sure of this: No man could have been heroic *then* who would not be heroic *now*. Good night!"

"Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity." These are the words of an older man writing to a younger. I hasten to say that Paul was not an ancient worthy at the time of the writing of this epistle but a man probably in his late fifties. His experience was wide and useful. Life had been a great and fruitful adventure. He had found compensations, he had suffered disappointments, he had achieved successes, whether he suspected it or not, he had made his name great in the history, not alone of the church, but of the race. Out of this ripe experience he writes to young Timothy, he commends him, he encourages him, "Let no man despise thy youth!"

"John Wesley was a student at Oxford when he formed the Holy Club. Martin Luther was twenty-seven when he climbed the Santa Scala at Rome. George Whitefield at twenty-one was moving England. Jeremy Taylor at eighteen was holding men spellbound in St. Paul's, London. George Williams was twenty-three when he founded the Young Men's Christian Association. David Livingstone at twenty-three was spending himself for Christ in darkest Africa." In secular realms young men have also achieved the most astounding feats. Alexander had conquered a world at thirty. Hannibal commanded the armies of Carthage at twenty-six. Captain John Smith had staked a claim for a colonial empire at twenty-eight. William Pitt was Prime Minister of Great Britain at twenty-five. Joan of Arc was burned at the stake at nineteen. Keats wrote his greatest poetry before he was twenty-four and died at twenty-five.

St. Paul looked to the young man for fine character, noble Christian living, splendid Christian service. He asked for deeds and not simply words. Of course this young man was presumably faithful and loyal to his profession, but St. Paul, it seems, wanted something unusually fine and worthy of him. In effect he said, "Let men honor your youth and profit by your Christian example." Young people of our day and age have been criticized because while they have talked about high ideals and made fine promises they have not been overly zealous in the actual living of the Christian life. A certain Scotch minister said to his young people that as regards Christian living

in these days, "There is by far more talk; there is by far less sacrifice." He further said that when Dr. Thomas Chalmers of Glasgow was praised for a great oratorical triumph he shook his head, "Yes, yes, but nothing followed, nothing came of it."

Now Dr. Chalmers is still a potent name in Scotland. His fame as a preacher was so great that when he spoke at noon on Thursday in Glasgow it was said that the coffee houses, the reading rooms and business offices were empty for a couple of hours. Everybody was at Tron Church. On one occasion when the church was filled and the doors closed, the pressure on the outside was such that the outer door at the front burst into splinters. It was Dr. Chalmers who led his brethren in the Great Disruption of the State Church of Scotland in 1843 when four hundred ministers marched out of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland to found the Free Church of Scotland. That Free Church launched by those dissenting ministers raised $5,000,000 in four years to build new churches and to launch six hundred new schools. It was a matter of conscience with those men. The State should not dominate the Church! When they preached they were not beating the air. They meant what they said and they were willing to pay the price of new beginnings and a faithful witness. No wonder Dr. Chalmers was interested in preaching, not in terms of oratory, but in terms of Christian service.

Folk from fifteen to forty have something quite unique and altogether indispensable to give to the cause of religion and to the ongoing work of the church if they have the right kind of stuff in them. The witness of any church ought to be more positive, more dynamic, more constructive, more radical in the best sense because of the impulse and the inspiration derived from the young life in the church. Francis Bacon said, "Men of age object too much, consult too long, adventure too little, repent too soon." The Christian life is an adventure, the work of the Christian church is a pioneer work and very often in church work we consult too long, risk too little, repent too soon. The enthusiasm of youth can and should save us from such mistakes. Youth in the church should keep the church young, keen, alert, adventurous, enthusiastic, unconventional, hopeful, triumphant.

We build on the foundations laid down by those who have gone before. A certain breadth of vision, a certain tolerance of view, a large measure of good will, have gone into the traditions of the church. We want to be worthy of what is fine in this tradition and we want to carry this work to greater heights. We want the Church to be a stronger, more generous, more courageous church in the future than it now is or ever has been. Christ must always be our pattern and example. He had a way of life, an attractiveness of personality, a quality of heart beyond all praise. Or perhaps I should say the only praise worth the while is the praise of thankful hearts and devoted lives. You will never be satisfied with life or what it offers except as you accept His way of life.

An old Swiss guide used to give a card to all who wanted to see a certain view, the loveliest in this section of the Alps. On this card were printed certain instructions. Very simple they were and very pointed!

1. Get a guide.
2. Get the best guide.
3. Get a guide who has been tried.
4. When you have found him, engage him quickly.
5. Trust yourself to him.
6. Do exactly what he tells you.
   Step where he steps.
   Walk where he walks.
   Go where he goes.

Make your own application. Make up your mind what you want most in life. And when you have made up your mind, get a guide, tried and trusted. Then follow him! It sounds like good sense and true religion and so it is. The church needs you and you.

PRAYER

O Thou great Father of the young, lay Thy hand upon the youth of the earth and bless them. Bless the young people of our own land, of our own community, and our own Church, who are the life of our life and the hope of our nation. Bless every young person on the face of the earth, especially those who have been weaned away from Thy all-pervading love, and those who long for peace and sympathy and understanding and human fellowship. Bless with a seven-fold blessing the young lives whose slender shoulders are bowed with much toil and suffering, and much weariness of things earthly and carnal. Let them behold a glimpse of Thy love, so they may understand the errors of those who have been instrumental in so great a waste of young energy, young, pure love, and young and ardent devotion to the causes which are so dear to Thy heart.

Hold the youth of the earth in Thy great heart; fold them in Thy embrace, and let them feel how great is Thy love, and how great was the price paid for their happiness and salvation through Thy Son, Jesus Christ. Help their young hearts to glow with determination to stand with Thee in all things which are of importance to the human race. We ask in humility, in contrition, in great sincerity and love. Help them, O Lord.

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

Union with Christ.

LESSON: John 14:20; 15:1-10; 17:21-23; Rom. 8:9, 10; I Cor. 6:15-20; II Cor. 5:17; Gal. 2:20; Eph. 2:20-22; 3:17-19; 4:15, 16; 5:29, 30; Phil. 3:9; 4:13; Col. 2:6, 7. Print John 15:1-10.

GOLDEN TEXT: "Abide in me, and I in you." John 15:4.

DEVOTIONAL READING: Ephesians 3:14-21.

INTER. & SR. TOPIC: Is Christ Living in Me?

Y. P. & ADULTS: The Privilege of Union with Christ.

This fifteenth chapter of the book of John is one of the most marvelous in all of the Bible. The thought may have been suggested to the Lord as they left the Temple gate behind, starting out across the Kedron valley to the Garden of Gethsemane on the lower reaches of the hill of Olivet. Over

the Temple gate was a great golden vine. The vine was the symbol of the nation Israel. See Psalm 80:8. Jesus uses it to represent the living union between Himself and His disciples. The bodily relation was soon to cease but the spiritual relation and union were to be all the closer. This was necessary in two senses. It was necessary to Him in order that His life might be expressed through them. It was necessary to them in order to *have* life and to express the life of Christ before the world and to glorify the Father.

Notice the nature of the symbol. The relationship is not that of a king and his subjects, of a captain and his soldiers, of a leader and his followers, of a pattern and imitator, of a carpenter and the furniture he makes. It is a relationship that is vital, a relationship of life; not an *organization* like a box, but an *organism* like a tree. "Apart from Me, ye can do nothing," Jesus said, and more than that, apart from Him we *are* nothing. We become nothing in Him in order to be something. Sin is always self-assertion in disregard of God. If the "i" in "sin" is bended into zero "Sin" becomes "Son" but the "I" must first become nothing in order to be "sons."

Notice the importance placed upon the bearing fruit. A vineyard or a tree is not primarily for show or for shade but for fruit. Mere leafage does not satisfy the thrifty husbandman, and profession does not satisfy Christ. If there is no fruit we are cast forth. The fruit we are to bear is the fruit of character and service. See Gal. 5:22, 23; II Peter 1:5-11. In this connection the teacher should point out that the Holy Spirit always secures the same character. Whether a man is white or black, yellow, brown, whether he has behind him a long line of Christian forbears or has just come new out of heathenism, the Holy Spirit always secures the same character.

Furthermore, our abiding is *our* responsibility. *We* are responsible for abiding. God cannot make us abide. We must cling close to and become a part of the vine, and abiding means inward life. The results of abiding are beautifully emphasized in our lesson today. See verses 16, 7, 10, 14. They are answered prayer; fruit-bearing; enjoyment of the love of Christ and God the Father; the friendship of Jesus. See John 15:15.

EVENING SERMON

THEME: *Why Fear Old Age?*

ORVIS F. JORDAN, D. D.

TEXT: "Cast me not off in the time of old age; forsake me not when my strength faileth." Psalm 71:9.

Among the many fears that bedevil the modern mind is that of old age. The beauty parlors are filled with women who are anxious to look young. Men are harried with fears that a few gray hairs may make them unacceptable at an employment office. It is a fear that must be met with religious assurance and faith.

What is it that people dread, when they fear old age? Men are apt to dread the decline of physical power. That comes very early. The base-ball player, the wrestler and the professional athlete is through at thirty-five.

That is old age for these groups. But in a machine-age most of the physical work is done by machines. The average horse power available for the service of each man in America is now astonishing. The steam turbine, the water wheel and the internal combustion engine have relieved us of many forms of physical toil. The premium is now upon deftness of fingers and upon the power to direct energy. Old men are often more useful in the important places than the young.

We may imagine that a decline of mental power comes early in the process of age. Some one who has a lapse of memory attributes it to age. Much decline of mental power is the result of mental laziness. The memory fails because it is not used, or because it is not entrusted with new treasures. When one remembers Lyman Abbott continuing to edit the Outlook magazine when he was well in the eighties, one knows that old age does not necessarily mean the decline of mental powers.

The loss of usefulness is another element in the fear of old age. Some years ago I met my old teacher who had been retired by his university at the age of seventy. "What are you going to do with your time from now on?" I queried. "O, I will be busier than ever," he said. "But what can you find to do?" Then he replied, "I will be doing all the things that need to be done and for which there is no money." Sustaining himself on his small retirement pension, he has lived up to this resolution, and few of us can realize that he is a retired man.

Some dread what they conceive to be the social isolation of old age. Members of an old generation find their friends slipping away from them one by one. It is something like the legend of the Wandering Jew who found a thousand years of life upon this earth an unendurable curse. He sought death, and could not find it.

But the Wandering Jew went at the problem in the wrong way. He should have continued to make new friends. It is not possible for old age to share all the pleasures of the young. But it is possible to make friends with youth. In the movie called "On Borrowed Time" an old grandfather and his grandson are inseparable companions. It was no fantastic portrait. There are millions of such friendships in the world. They give to the people full of years a youthful outlook and to the young steadiness and wisdom.

Most of all do people dread old age because of its supposed pessimism. The old person is supposed to become a grouch and a misanthrope. How untrue a picture this is of the kind of old age that is illumined with religious faith, we need to be constantly reminded. Go back to church and get acquainted with the people in the pews. The people with a genuine religious experience go through to the end loving life and believing in it.

If we have recounted some of the apparent disadvantages of old age, we should now recount some of the compensations. God is still God to people at all times of life. He has not forgotten to bring compensations to those of advancing years.

As time goes along, people find the value of life in its quality rather than in the number of its anniversaries. Methusaleh is said to have lived a very long time. But what did he ever do? I would rather have been President

Harper, who founded the University of Chicago and died before he was sixty, than to have been Methusaleh, from all the information that is now available. President Harper lived the longer. Age helps us to discover the length of life is not in the number of the years but in the number and quality of its experiences.

In old age we turn from the pleasures of sense to the deeper meanings. It belongs to childhood to seek every type of sense impression. It belongs to old age to find a philosophy of life. I have often congratulated some old person upon the fact that at last there was time in his life to meditate upon the meaning of life, the eternal import of the appearance of a human life in time and space. In working out a philosophy of life, age has a whole new world to discover.

Old age brings to many men poise and stability of judgment. Look around the governments of the world in these stirring times and you will find many men in their seventies at the helm. They have lived long enough to know that human cooperation depends upon some measure of compromise. They do not fight out every issue but try talking instead of fighting.

Diplomacy is the gift of the aged. Benjamin Franklin undoubtedly saved the American cause by his work at the court of France when he was long past the time when many people retire. He made a remarkable impression upon the people of that nation. Diplomacy is a word with more than a political connotation. It is the oil that lubricates much of our social machinery.

There is a fight against old age in which all people of advancing years should be enlisted. It is to be fought on four fronts, the physical, the mental, the social and the religious. With due attention to these fronts, the enemy of old age may be stalled off for a long time by many people.

The question of health is a religious question as is evidenced by the many people who seek faith-healing cults to secure it. The health of our bodies is dependent upon obedience to physical laws which are the laws of God. Our bodies are to be treated as temples, one biblical teacher tells us. Bodily exercise profiteth a little, declares Paul. He had a thorn in the flesh, some physical infirmity, which he asked God three times to remove, but it remained. He received instead the grace and strength to live with it.

In these days we are the heirs of a great scientific heritage. We know more about the laws of our bodies than has ever been known. Temperate in all things, is one of the most important rules that religion has to add to the injunctions of the family physicians. Our excesses in work, play, eating and pleasure-seeking are the basis of many of the ills that will make us old before our time.

The fight against old age must be carried forward upon the mental front. Even those who professionalize in psychiatry recognize how important religion is in keeping minds young, and effective. One is never too old to learn. Learning for the sake of money-making is a lower goal; learning for the sake of achieving a higher type of personality is another. The habits of observation, reflection, reading, meditation and problem solving belong to no particular time of life. It is just surrender for any one to say, "I am

too old to learn." It is said that James Martineau learned the Greek language after he was eighty years of age. The old person with a well stored mind is socially acceptable—everywhere he goes. And this leads us to the matter of the social relations of those that are acquiring years.

In many cities of the United States one may find a Borrowed Time Club. It is composed of retired people that are usually more than seventy years of age. It is a good idea, for most people like to find a place where those of their own type of experience consort. However, I do not like the name of this club. If I were ever to try to start one, I would want to adopt a name that suggested activity and development rather than surrender. And I am sure that those who are seventy years of age should by no means restrict their social contacts to people of their own age. God has made this a social world. From the cry of the infant making demands upon its mother to the last struggle of life, we are set to the task of social cooperation. If the aged think they may escape social obligation, they reject God's appointed way of life.

The fight against old age is to be waged particularly upon the religious front. Nearly every year the city minister has the funeral of some person who has completely broken down mentally and physically before the age of seventy. These are the worriers who develop high blood pressure, heart trouble and at last a complete organic break-down. They lived without a practical faith in God, even though they may have professed a creed. They had not learned to say "underneath me are the Everlasting Arms."

On the contrary the person who takes all of life's ills and reverses in sure confidence that God will take care of him, shows an amazing capacity to stand ills and reverses. It is no accident that there are so many people of advanced years in the churches. Religion has kept them alive.

Religion keeps alive the great hopes on which the human heart is stayed. There is always something new to look forward to; some fresh blessing to be appropriated, some new victory to be won. The incurable optimism of the Christian faith is one of its great characteristics.

I can well imagine some aged person replying to me in spite of this plea not to fear old age, there is still death. What is it that we dread about death? Usually it is just like going to sleep. We have always thought of death as humanity's greatest enemy. It is just as natural as being born, in fact a new birth into another order of existence.

But what we dread about old age is not so much that it comes to an end, but rather that it might become a long period of futility when life would be a burden to ourselves and to others. What we seek is that in advanced years we still have power to learn and to achieve, even though our place in society is different from that of younger folks. We shall find this fuller life to the end of our little day if we walk daily with God.

MID-WEEK SERMON

THEME: ***The Thorough Man.***

TEXT: Philippians 3:13.

Apostle Paul: "I am ambitious! (1 Thess. 4:11; Romans 15:20; 2 Cor. 5:9) To attain the goal!" His great example, the Lord Jesus. "It is

finished!" One in history who did God's best, and holds mankind in his power forever.

The Failure Of Slackness: Statistics by insurance actuaries: One hundred young men of twenty-five starting—forty years after? Thirty-six dead; fifty-four financially dependent on family or charity; five just getting along; four well-to-do; one rich. Money not highest goal, but figures tell story. Large percentage fail to use ability and opportunity. We make excuses for selves. We are occupied with principles, and have no mind for details. We miss appointments because of the pressure of business. Largely, it is simply slackness. We are told we use only ten per cent of possible brain power.

The Thorough Man: The reason why certain men with few advantages succeed is that they are diligent, concentrated, perservering and conscientious, they are thorough. In the realm of character. We could talk of honest thinking, of conviction, of orderly habits daily, of accomplishment. But thoroughness takes its highest form in character, and here slackness is an agent of destruction.

The Elements of Thoroughness: Conviction of God's purpose. Seen in Jesus Christ. The purpose of your life and mine. Concentration of effort. "Better be a fanatic and get what you aim at, than be so broad like some stream that floods over miles of mud, with no current, no power, only stagnation and death."—Maclaren. Consecration of life. "If I live I must succeed in my undertaking; death alone will put a stop to my efforts."—Livingstone to Stanley. To be a Christian live as Paul; better, as Christ.

TOPICS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE'S SOCIETIES

CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR: Y. P.—Christian Virtues. A Christian is Gracious. James 3:13-18.

Jr.—How Crippled Children are Helped. Matt. 17:14-21.

WALTHER LEAGUE: November Topic. Education (Colleges). Discuss attitude of local Churches toward young people away at school. Contacts. Discuss Campus Churches, and campus Religious activities.

FOR THE BULLETIN BOARD

You serve your country best by serving your God.
The wages of sin are being increased too.
True religion is more than pretense.
Your religion holds out if it is worked out.
Christianity has various forms but only one mission.
Sweeping your own doorstep will help clean up the community.
A destitution is Atheism, never an institution.
The Church is the nursery of religion.

NOVEMBER, FOURTH SUNDAY

CALL TO WORSHIP: "My lips shall shout for joy when I sing praises unto Thee; and my soul, which Thou hast redeemed."
PSALM: 29.
PRELUDE: Procession du St. Sacrement—*Chauvet.*
ANTHEM: Out of the Deep—*Wirtz.*
OFFERTORY: The Swan—*Saint Saens.*
POSTLUDE: Maestoso—*MacDowell.*
OFFERTORY SENTENCE: "I will abundantly bless her provision: I will satisfy her poor with bread."
OFFERTORY PRAYER: Giving as Thou hast prospered us is but our duty toward Thee and toward our fellow-men, and we ask not that Thou bless the gifts we bring. Bless Thou us unto greater works in Thy cause, so we may abound in good works.
BENEDICTION: Grace, mercy and peace from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord be with you always.

SERMONS

THEME: ***Gratitude In An Aged King.***

CHARLES HADDON NABERS, D. D.

TEXT: I Chron. 29:10-22.
HYMNS: "For the beauty of the earth. . . ."—*Dix,* 7s, 61.
"Great God, we sing Thy Mighty . . ."—*Luther's Chant, L. M.*

The reign of David is over, almost. The audience assembles for the last act. The curtain parts for the final scene. Jerusalem is packed to extreme discomfort by the gathering of the tribes, a convocation called thither by command of the king. For the final speech of King David is to be made. Once and only once will he appear on the familiar balcony, and address the people on "The State of the Nation."

Sit beside aged David as he prepares to speak. What would you say if you were king, and could speak just once more to your people? Much to choose from! The years which stretch behind furnish stories of heroism, of conquest, of achievement to thrill, if that be the tale the king shall tell.

Many a beautiful song has been sweetly chanted since he let his freckled fingers caress the harp-strings to still the insane passion of Saul. Shall he tell of perils endured when Saul made him a vagabond and a fugitive, and when he cried, "I shall yet die at the hand of Saul?"

Many a smooth stone has been hurled by lads in Israel since his true arm directed his sling for the downfall of strutting Goliath. Shall he tell of his prowess from that day to now? Modern heroes are not bashful in telling and retelling their exploits, and with fresh decorations occasionally. Might not such a story fire the listeners to personal heroism?

Many a pile of material—rich and rare—has been assembled about Moriah for the building of a palace and the construction of a temple which shall localize both government and religion on a spot which all the earth shall forever deem sacred.

Wealth and recovery has come to a depressed people; shall he say so in such language that they shall always remember him as the author of their prosperity? Modern rulers have not been unduly modest in making similar claims. It is no bankrupt, unbalanced budget nation he leaves for another

ruler. The land has abundance of food. The gold bullion is more than sufficient for any demand that can be made. Remind the nation of this? Why not?

David sees it all in the pageantry of the past. Events come trooping by, nod a moment and fly into the mists of fleeing thoughts. His half closed eye is the lens of a candid camera to show him Samuel anointing him in the fields of Jesse, the visit to the camp where he saw and slew the giant, the jealousy of Saul, and his life with a price on his head, hiding in the caves of Judah, the sweet friendship with Jonathan, the tragic episode of Bathsheba and Uriah, the death of his child, the revolt of Absalom, the clash of armies and the song of victory, the cry from the roof, "O Absalom, my son Absalom, would God that I had died for thee," the pushing back of the nation's boundaries, the gathering of wealth for the great buildings on the mountain, the growing loyalty of the people, his whimsical desire for water from the well at Bethlehem. "If I want a speech, the years which lie behind present wonderful pictures that I can hold up for the instruction of my people." What shall it be, this final address of the greatest king the nation has yet known?

It is not of the difficulties overcome that he will speak from the balcony to the multitudes below; they need something more. It is not of the wealth that his reign has brought that he will speak, the people must trust not in that which can be seen for that is temporal, but things which cannot be seen are eternal. It is not of personal life that he shall talk, for the people must turn from the king to One greater than all kings. David, who in more than forty years has climbed the heights to glory and sunk to the depths of sorrow, will ask for neither praise nor pity in the closing scene on the stage where he has long played a major role. The old star speaks his final lines! What shall they be? What note sounds from this ruler?

Gratitude to God! So speaks the king, and the speech is a prayer in the presence of all Israel:

"Blessed by thou, Lord God of Israel, our Father, for ever and ever. Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty for all that is in the heaven and the earth is thine; thine is the kingdom, O Lord, and thou art exalted as head over all. Both riches and honor come of thee, and thou reignest over all; and in thine hand is power and might; and in thine hand it is to make great, and to give strength unto all. Now therefore, our God, we thank thee, and praise thy glorious name!

"But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be willing to offer so willingly after this sort? For all things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee. For we are strangers before thee, and sojourners, as were all our fathers; our days on the earth are as a shadow, and there is none abiding. O Lord our God, all this store that we have prepared to build thee an house for thine holy name cometh of thine hand, and is all thine own. I know also, my God, that thou triest the heart, and hast pleasure in uprightness. As for me, in the uprightness of mine heart I have willingly offered all these things: and now have I seen with joy thy people, which are present here, to offer willingly unto thee. O Lord God of Abraham,

Isaac, and of Israel, our fathers, keep this forever in the imagination of the thoughts of the heart of thy people, and prepare their hearts unto thee."

But gratitude is not to be solely from the king. David said to the whole congregation, "Now bless the Lord your God!" All the congregation blessed the Lord God of their fathers, and bowed down their heads and worshipped the Lord. On that day they ate and drank before the Lord with great gladness.

It was a thanksgiving day to usher out one of the most resplendent periods of history the people of Israel had ever known; it was a thanksgiving day to usher in the most brilliant reign Jerusalem has known since that time. With gratitude to God from ruler and people the curtain rang down upon the great reign of David, and the aged king was gathered to his fathers. With gratitude to God from ruler and people the curtain rose upon the rule of Solomon, a period of widest territory and of greatest prosperity.

Certain eternal elements in the thanksgiving prayer of David clamor for admission into our dreary and stunted and shallow lives if we worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.

David was under no delusion as to the source of the prosperity that came to the nation over which he reigned. He did not think that clever diplomatic maneuvering of surrounding nations had lessened the fear of enemy invasion, and that brains in the cabinet had given greatness to his rule. When enemies were stilled, he believed it was because a God in heaven had said, "Peace, be still," and that peace was the gift of the Lord and not an achievement of a political trickster able to lie quicker and easier than his opponent. David did not think it possible to guide a nation into channels where quiet waters flow and lead people into pastures green, without the conscious and constant aid that comes only from fellowship with God. David did not think that righteousness and honor were plants which would grow either in a nation or in a human life without being carefully and prayerfully tended by loving hands and intelligent minds. And these plants flourish only when weeds of sin and selfishness are uprooted in their vicinity and proper attention daily given. David knew that every good and perfect gift came from the loving hand of God, and that all things come from God, and when we give to Him, we are giving Him back of His very own.

We have entirely too much talk of our prowess and ability, and too much disregard of the supreme place the Lord plays in the affairs of life for individuals and nations. When things go wrong, we blame somebody else, and when things go right, we swell up like an inflated frog, and shout in pride, "We planned it that way." To your knees, O America, we are here only because the Lord our God is good, and His goodness endureth forever.

Turn to the streets of Jerusalem when a greater than David is speaking before the dull stones which form walls beside narrow lanes, "Think you that the men in Siloam were bigger sinners than many others on whom a tower did not fall? I tell you, nay!" Think you that European peoples groping in blacked-out towns and clutching gas masks and diving for bomb shelters below the streets are sinners far and above men in our nation who sit serenely beneath their own vine and fig tree, and thank God they are not as other peoples? I tell you, nay! For except we repent, (*and the first step in*

repentance is to get rid of the idea that we need no Lord in heaven to guide and cleanse, and have no occasion to offer Him gratitude) for except we repent, we shall all likewise perish.

Gratitude to the Lord is expressed by taking time from our sinful and selfish pursuits to come into the House of God, and shout with joy at the demonstration of His love we have personally experienced. Not to have time for expressing our gratitude to God is not to have gratitude.

Gratitude to the Lord is even better expressed by speaking a kindly word for Jesus to the men and women we meet daily in our business and social relationships. Jesus needs our tongues to speak unto others of His saving grace, and let the redeemed of the Lord never forget to shout abroad the goodness of God.

Gratitude to the Lord is even better expressed by a life that is so mastered by the Christ that one can see that we have been with Jesus.

Twenty-Fourth Sunday After Trinity.

THEME: *Ultimate Values In Life.*

F. W. BURNHAM, D. D.

TEXT: James 4:13-15.
HYMNS: "Jesus, still lead on . . ."—*Hubert, P. M.*
"Forward! Be our watchword. . . ."—*St. Alban's,* 6s, 5s, *D.*

It has been said wisely that "the first thing to consider in life is the end of it." That does not mean, however, that we are to fix our thoughts upon death and go about looking for a grave. But it does mean that we shall take thought for the future.

To look ahead is a mark of manhood, and the farther the look the taller the man. A child lives in the present, enjoys to the full, when it can, each passing hour of the day and chafes at a program which includes tomorrow. On the other hand, the mature man lives in all three tenses, past, present and future. Enriched by his past, and intense in his present, he makes both contribute to his future, wherein lies the goal of his endeavors.

The forward look is an evidence of culture and of civilization. The savage feasts for to-day, though he may have to go hungry tomorrow, while the civilized man spreads his present supplies to meet tomorrow's needs. To take thought, to lay by something for the rainy day, to have a savings account at the bank, to take out life insurance, to master a trade or profession, all this is to be civilized; while to live from hand to mouth is pagan.

The higher the scale of living the more perfect and complete is this power of vision, until, at its highest, ultimate purposes and values are discerned. An artist sees his picture complete before the first lines are laid upon the canvas. The architect conceives his building and all its appointments before even the floor-plans are sketched.

Said Jesus: "Which of you, desiring to build a tower, doth not first sit down and count the cost, whether he have wherewith to complete it?"

Yet how few of us have thought our lives through to the end. Most intelligent people have aims. They set for themselves goals. But their

goal-posts are mid-way the game. They plan for temporal success, for future well-being and security; but that is not looking through to the end. How many a successful man has planned for himself and his family; built a large house and ample gardens where the small children can play and the older young people may entertain their friends, only to find presently, almost suddenly, that the children have grown up and gone, and that he and his wife are left in the big house alone. The goal was not set far enough ahead. Someone said, recently, in my hearing: "A goal is a place to stop just long enough to get ready for the next advance." And that is true of all lesser goals than the ultimate.

What, then, for us are the ultimate, the supreme values? What is your life?

If merely to live; from day to day to get along, to escape hardship and pain and responsibilities, to enjoy the present, to think mainly of self, to render no hard service which shall add to the increment of human good; if that is all, then well may the words of the Apostle James apply to your life: "It is a vapor that appeareth for a little time and then vanisheth away."

But most of our lives are above such a stage, at least I trust this is true of you who hear me now. We take thought. We look ahead. We plan for the years. We include others in the scope of our plans. We get under burdens; both our own and the burdens of others, as far as we can. We want to do some good in the world. We try to be unselfish.

But is our vision complete? Do we live for the highest? Are the goal-posts far enough ahead? Listen to these words of the Apostle Paul: "For me to live is Christ and to die is gain." That sweeps the whole gamut of man's earthly existence. In that light of his Damascus-road experience Paul had thought life through to its ultimate, and for him Christ was the consummation of it all. Henceforth, for him Christ was the vision and revelation of what a human life ought to be. The beauty of Christ's perfect selflessness had entranced Paul's vision. Christ was the moral dynamic of his life, the power, henceforth, which motivated him. "Yet not I," said he, "but Christ liveth in me, and the life which I now live I live in faith, the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me." His supreme purpose was to do the will of Christ, and his ultimate moral aim, "To attain unto the fullness of the measure of the stature of Christ." His final crown of glory would be, "likeness to Christ—to bear the image of the heavenly." Constrained by the love of Christ he sought to persuade other men to be reconciled to God.

This ultimate conception of life is realizable to-day. It is possible for you and me. It is not the dream of a religious idealist; but the sober purpose of a well-balanced mind. It will work in your life and mine, if we will to have it so. George Ennis, a successful business-man, found it so and turned the genius of a great business career into happy, efficient service on behalf of the kingdom of God. William Whitney Borden found it so and, together with his fine young wife, turned his millions of money into currency for God's realm. Kagawa and E. Stanley Jones find it so and discover resources of life and strength unknown and unclaimed before. Helen Keller, blind and deaf and dumb, finds it so and has said: "My limitations never make me

unhappy. I think that through my limitations God is working out some good purposes. My troubles have also been great adventures. They have brought me understanding, friendship, and taught me how to serve the world." Muriel Lester, the Jane Addams of London, who gave up a life of luxury to live amongst the poor of East End London, finds it so. She says: "Our training in meditation convinced us that we must begin to live in the streets of London as Jesus lived in Galilee."

But we must not only see this ultimate goal of life. We must follow it with inextinguishable zeal and courage.

What is your life? Is it self and defeat, or is it Christ and victory?

PRAYER

Our Heavenly Father, we thank Thee for another day and for all it may bring to us. Help us to live it with Thee and for Thee.

We thank Thee for that fountain of life which Thou hast opened for us in Jesus Christ, our Lord, of which one may drink and thirst no more. Give us to drink of Him that He shall become in us a well of water springing up unto everlasting life.

We thank Thee that Thou hast set for us goals so high that they cannot be reached this side of Heaven; but to the attainment of which Thou hast promised the aid of Thy divine power through the Holy Spirit, our Helper and Guide. Keep the goal ever before us, so that, forgetting the things which are behind, and stretching forth toward the things which are before, we shall press on toward the mark unto the prize of our high calling which is in Christ Jesus, the Lord.

If Thou bringest us into pain or sorrow, give us grace to bear it well; or if into joy and happiness, that we shall not lose ourselves in it. Buttress our souls against strong temptation, and help us to overcome. Forgive us that we have fallen so often, and set our feet again upon the solid rock.

Let us be numbered to-day among Thy servants who labor for peace and good-will upon the earth, and wilt Thou, O Gracious Father of all man-kind, bring to fruition our labors and our prayers. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

Prayer and Thanksgiving.

LESSON: Psa. 103:107; Matt. 6:5-15; John 17:1-26; Eph. 5:18-21; Phil. 4:6; I Thess. 5:16-18; I John 5:14, 15. Print Matt. 6:5-15; Eph. 5:20; I Thess. 5:16-18.

GOLDEN TEXT: "Pray without ceasing; in everything give thanks." I Thes. 5:17-18.

DEVOTIONAL READING: Psalm 107:23-31.

INTER. & SR. TOPIC: Thanking God.

Y. P. & ADULTS: Praying and Giving Thanks.

In this passage in Matthew Jesus gives us both negative and positive commands. The Pharisees did not really commune with God in their prayers. They prayed only for display and they received their reward, not in answer to prayer for they did not pray, but in being seen of men and

in a reputation for piety and the consequent offices and emoluments for which they were really working.

Over against their conduct Jesus set that which is to be the attitude and conduct of the sincere Christian. The closet referred to is the inner chamber. Shutting the door, means to shut out of thought all that may interfere with worship, everything that would tend to make one less earnest or less absorbed in his communion with the Heavenly Father. The requirement simply is that the prayer must be sincere. There must be no element of showing off or display of one's piety. Jesus and His disciples frequently prayed with others. The phrase so often heard, "Let us unite in prayer" means just that. Heart should be joined with heart and mind with mind, and petitions vocal and silent arise from lips and hearts. Neither does the precept forbid the lifting of the heart to God in the crowded streets or in the midst of a busy office or factory. We are, however, far more likely to engage in prayer if we have set seasons and places where we can retire in quiet, where we can be alone with God.

Now the so-called prayers against which Jesus warns us are wrong for a number of reasons, because they do not come from the heart but come rather from a desire to make a vain display; because they are not the simple talk of a child with his Heavenly Father; because prayer is not an effort to inform the Divine Mind but an expression of the longing of a human soul. We must, however, make mention of our desires because God wants us to turn to Him with our longings and with our troubles, or with our thanksgiving, because that is the best way of maintaining the real communion between God and man which is the soul of religion.

Then in verses 9-13 there follows the model prayer. Luke says that this prayer was given at the request of the disciples for some form of prayer. Notice that the wording is different in the two Gospels. Jesus did not say "in these words pray ye." What He said was, "After this manner pray ye." Thus we see that Jesus did not give this prayer to His followers as a set form of words which they were to repeat in order to be heard. He gave it to them, rather, as a model upon which all true prayers should be based. We have many instances of prayer by the disciples but none of their using exactly this form of words. As long as we fill it with the true spirit of prayer there is in many cases a distinct advantage in its use in the form in which we have it. Practically all worshippers know it and it could be used as a means of united vocal prayer by congregations of all creeds and of all ages. Notice that the prayer is divided into three distinct parts, worship, petition and praise.

EVENING SERMON

THEME: ***Thanksgiving, Unlimited.***

PARUL R. KIRTS, D. D.

TEXT: I Thess. 5:18.
HYMNS: "When all Thy Mercies. . . ."—*St. Fulbert, C. M.*
"O Bless the Lord, my Soul . . ."—*Thatcher, S. M.*

Origen said that the whole life of the faithful should be one great connected prayer. This ideal the Apostle Paul held up before his Thessalonian

readers when he wrote, in the verse preceding the text, "Pray without ceasing." Thus he challenged them to a spiritual adventure. He had no intention of persuading them to spend their time saying formal prayers, although he would have been the last to suggest that set times for worship are not important in maintaining spiritual health. Unceasing prayer is the informal longing of the heart after the highest good that God can give.

You will find an excellent illustration of the informal prayer in the story of Nehemiah, who, as cupbearer to King of Persia, went into the royal presence to ask for leave of absence to return to Jerusalem that he might repair his fathers' sepulchres. Realizing the seriousness of the request which he was about to make, Nehemiah "prayed to the God of heaven." His prayer was a brief lifting up of his heart to the throne of the Infinite, to whom he habitually made known his hopes and fears.

These two ideas which Paul sets side by side—unceasing prayer and thanksgiving in everything—are closely bound together. Thanksgiving is an essential part of prayer. Prayer is not all desire. True, we must continually be reaching out after the highest if we are to make progress in holiness. But in our striving we must not neglect to exercise the grace of gratitude. Not only should we constantly realize the infinite capacity and willingness of God to give us our heart's desire and to help us to become what we ought to be, but we should always be conscious of the great debt that we owe to the heavenly Father, who cares for all his children.

To be thankful in everything is the test of faith based on the infinite love of God. Some find it easy to be thankful for the good "breaks," but have no patience with God when they get a bad "break." An example of this very modern man is Jacob, who bargains with the Almighty to share dividends with him if he is guaranteed prosperity. Jacob vowed at Bethel: "If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I come again to my father's house in peace, and Jehovah will be my God, then . . . of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee."

A selfish way of dealing with God! There must be a complete reversal of this attitude if a man wishes to gain genuine gratitude. With the hand of faith he must reach out toward a Being who expresses infinite love; who is more willing to give blessings to his children than is an earthly father to give good gifts to a son. Only a venturesome putting forth of faith can seize upon such a conception of the Highest, but it is the only way in which we can save ourselves from bargaining with the loving Giver of life and all good things.

Abraham exercised such a faith, and how splendidly he stood the test! Back of a seemingly cruel demand, to take the life of his own son, he could discern the loving purpose of God to make him the father of a great nation. Abraham looked upon God as good. Nothing else mattered. Even with a grateful, though heavy, heart he could ascend the holy hill to offer up his only son as a sacrifice.

If, however, we seek the clearest and most perfect example of a life of trust in the God of love and of surrender to his will, we shall find it in Jesus.

Out of this faith blossomed gratitude, as a flower flourishes in soft earth under sun and shower. In the narrative of the raising of Jesus' friend Lazarus, John records a clear word of thanksgiving of our Lord: "Father, I thank thee that thou heardest me." We may be sure that always, everywhere, and in everything his heart went up to the Father in grateful acknowledgment of his mercy.

Some one may say: "Was not Paul a little too enthusiastic in advising people to give thanks in everything? He might properly have exhorted the members of the church in Thessalonica to give thanks for their pleasures, but surely he did not mean that they should be grateful for their pains."

This is precisely what Paul did mean when he said, "In everything give thanks." We may well be thankful to God for pain, because in time of physical weakness we are often driven in upon Him who is strong. Then we know that the body is only the scaffolding of the true structure—character, and that some day the false will fall away and the true self will appear complete in glory.

Then there are some who will say to this bold exhortation of Paul's to be thankful in everything, "We can see how there is cause for thankfulness in success, but why should we be grateful for defeat and failure?" This looks like a valid objection, and if we are content with only a superficial consideration of Paul's words, we may let it go at that.

Few there are who would find fault with the admonition to be thankful for success, but there are many who would be hard put to it to find cause for thanksgiving for losses and misfortunes. Yet defeat may result in virtues for which we may be eternally thankful. For one thing, failure may teach a man humility, a quality of character which, if a man is fortunate enough to win it, will make him great. Moreover, defeat may teach us patience, a virtue that grows with the years, as hopes remain unrealized and plans are thwarted.

"I have no hesitancy in thanking God for ease," some one may say. "But if Paul meant what he said in this text, he asked men to be thankful for difficulties and hard times; he seems to have overstepped a bit there." Far from it! Paul knew more difficulties to the square foot of ground covered than most pilgrims on life's rough road. He was beaten, imprisoned, shipwrecked. He had to ply his trade of tent making honestly to support himself in decency. Yet in his letters there is no word of complaint. He even rejoiced that he was a bond servant of the Lord Jesus Christ. He gloried in his sufferings and hardships. For he saw that all these experiences helped to make him the man that God wanted him to be. He realized that difficulties were wings bearing him nearer to the heart of God. Be thankful for ease; be thankful also for trials. "Sweet are the uses of adversity."

With marked insight my friend, Dr. Calvin W. Laufer, in "Key-Notes of Optimism," wrote that "the genius of Christianity is never more manifest than in the hour of trial. It is then that it proves itself to be the soul's anchorage and resource. By the comfort it gives, the strength it inspires, the courage it arouses, it robs misfortune of much of its embarrassment, . . .

and brings eternal good out of chaos and confusion. It . . . makes us to know and feel that

> "Behind the dim unknown
> Standeth God within the shadow,
> Keeping watch above his own."

Surely this is something for which to be grateful.

"Giving thanks for standards attained is reasonable," some one may say, "but what about the ideals that we have not reached?" True, some of us seem to be striving for the unattainable all our lives, and never grasping the prize. Well, listen to Florence Earle Coates who sings:

> "I thank Thee that howe'er we climb
> There is yet something higher;
> That though through all our reach of time
> We to the stars aspire,
> Still, still, beyond us burns sublime
> The pure sidereal fire!"

When Paul told his readers to be thankful in everything, he was speaking out of his own experience. He had practiced what he was preaching. He had discovered that the life of unbounded, unreserved gratitude results in a radiance that the ingrate never can know. Thanksgiving was an *avenue* which he had found to Christlikeness. Take this road through the days and it will lead you nearer to Him.

MID-WEEK SERMON

THEME: ***The Multiplication of Jesus.***

TEXT: John 3:30.

The question of Christianity redeeming the world. It will be done by the multiplication of Jesus, by an army of Christians for the conquest of mankind.

The Divine Arithmetic: We have proposed and tried many methods. Legislation, embargoes, education; we have seen them all break down, because in their form and application religion disappears. John's forecast of Jesus: "He must increase." He began to make friends. Began with two, added more until there twelve. He never wrote anything, never formulated a doctrinal system. Just gave himself to twelve men. The twelve became one hundred-twenty. The Church began to march when they became three thousand. History has marched in the footsteps of the faithful eleven.

The Divine Multiplicand: The twelve were with him daily; walked and talked, dined, slept under same roof. In that daily intercourse their minds started with his ideas; their hearts were steeped in his spirit. More, he imparted to them his own quality of life. His object was the development, maturing, enrichment of personality. It was the multiplication of himself he sought: "He must increase." In the effort to bring the utmost of divine help to meet the deepest human need the agent is to be devoted personality. Not legislation to alter the system, but penetration of the systems by Christian character and spirit.

The Human Multipliers: This personal method was to be permanent and universal: John 20:21; Matthew 10:40. The problem centers with us, the human multipliers of Jesus. Second half of text. Before we can qualify as multipliers, we must be partakers of his spirit; selfless, serving, sacrificing. Philippians 4:13. We must multiply him and we must multiply the Cross. Inevitably the Cross confronts the disciple as it confronted Jesus. Ultimately our testing is Christ's testing: does that Cross loom larger than the joy of service to the utmost? It is a large order, but we can fill it, gradually and progressively, building ourselves up in the faith, in faithful action until even the Cross loses its fearfulness and we can bear it.

TOPICS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE'S SOCIETIES

CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR: Y. P.—A Christian is Grateful (Christian Virtue). Luke 17:11-19. Eph. 5:20. Col. 3:17.
Jr.—What do Christmas Seals Do? Matt. 25:31-45.
WALTHER LEAGUE: November Topic, College Education. Make Survey of Educational Institutions. Know what is taught in them, and from what point of view. Know that your schools are teaching Christian and American Principles.

FOR THE BULLETIN BOARD

It's a weak religion that touches you only when you are sick.
To avoid a crash, even your faith must maintain flying speed.
The sap-wood lies right under the bark.
The well rounded life is always square.
Character is more easily sold than purchased.
Public opinion is private opinion gone vocal.
The fruit forms only as the roots are nourished.
The shorter your memory the less grateful you will be.
Happiness is not as costly as unhappiness.

NOVEMBER, FIFTH SUNDAY

CALL TO WORSHIP: "And Samuel took a stone and set it between Mizpah and Shen, saying, Hitherto hath the Lord helped us."

PSALM: 145.

PRELUDE: Adagio—*Guilmant.*

ANTHEM: Praise the Lord—*Gaul.*

OFFERTORY: Andante—*Grieg.*

POSTLUDE: Postlude—*Volckmar.*

OFFERTORY SENTENCE: "And He said unto thee, Take heed, and keep yourselves from all covetousness; for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of things which he possesseth."

OFFERTORY PRAYER: Make us wise unto Thy ways, Heavenly Father. We are lost, and we do not have the grace nor wisdom to turn to Thee in faith, knowing that only Thou canst restore us to the right way. Give us courage to follow the teachings of men who have kept in contact with Thee. To this end accept this offering. Bless it, and bless us, Thy children.

BENEDICTION: "Grace be with you."

SERMONS

THEME: *Cementing Power of Christian Faith.*

ALVIN E. MAGARY, D. D.

TEXT: Philippians 1:1-2.

A crowd of people does not make a church any more than half a dozen people living in one house make a family. People living entirely separate from one another may be more closely bound together than those who live under one roof, because there are certain cementing elements in their relationship which bind them together in a genuine fellowship.

In the New Testament we frequently come upon the figure of the "building" as representing the Christian community. "Ye are rooted and built up in him." "Built up a spiritual house." "Ye are built upon the foundation of the prophets, Jesus Christ being the chief cornerstone, in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth into an holy temple of the Lord, in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the spirit."

A mere audience is not a church. A million people listening to a radio sermon is not a church, any more than a pile of stones is a building.

Now if we were to ask how the pile of stones may become a building, we might talk about architects and plans, about purposes and labor, and all this might be highly suggestive and interesting. But this passage reminds us of something else that is necessary to convert building material into an edifice or a crowd of people into a church.

I am thinking of the cement which binds stone to stone.

I. "Consolation in Christ."

One is reluctant to take away the cherished meanings which have become attached to favorite Bible passages; but we ought to know what the men who wrote them really meant. The word used here is the same as that used in the fourteenth chapter of John, where Jesus says, "I will send the

comforter . . . I will not leave you comfortless." When Jesus was taking leave of his disciples, just before his arrest and crucifixion, they were discouraged and afraid. He said, "Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid . . . I will not leave you leaderless . . . I will send the Leader." That hour in their lives, and the tasks for the future he had laid upon them, were too profound and too great to call for what we usually mean by "consolation." The most perfect figure for the divine spirit as the "Paraklete" is that in the twenty-third psalm, "He leadeth me . . . yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil . . ."

Thus the first element in this binding power that has enabled the church to withstand the hostility of the world is the leadership of Christ. Out of the diverse personalities of men, of unlike temperament, different races, conditions and tastes, the church has been fused together. Her critics make much of her divisions, sects and schisms; but he is a dull reader whose history does not teach him that, despite all the bickerings of ecclesiastics and theologians, the church has possessed a rooted oneness and its impact on the world has been that of a united force. This "consolation" of which Paul speaks is in the fact that,

> Though with a scornful wonder,
> Men see her sore oppressed,
> By schisms rent asunder,
> By heresies distressed . . . ,

it remains true that "she on earth hath union," and the first element which cements that union together is the guidance and leadership of Christ.

II. "If there be any comfort of love."

Several words in the New Testament are rendered "comfort." The word here is "paramuthion," and it occurs only in this place.

We usually think of comfort as some kind of soothing influence. A soft, downy blanket, designed to keep us warm and cosy while we sleep, is called a comforter. And there are plenty of people who think that this is the nature and function of religion.

We cannot get the true meaning from the New Testament, because the word occurs only here. But we can see what Paul had in mind by looking elsewhere. Plato uses the word to signify exhortation or urging. Again he says, "The obedient nature will readily yield to such incentives." And again he refers to certain fruits as the "stimulants" of the weary appetite. We see then why Dr. Moffatt translates this "by every stimulus of Christ, by every incentive of love." It is not that we may be cosy and contented that we come together here, not that we may soothe each other, but that we may be stirred up, given a common incentive, a common motive, ambition, aim. This is a powerful element in binding us together and making a crowd of people into a church.

Of course that is the true meaning of the word "comfort" in English. Notice the second syllable, "fort." It is precisely the same word we use to denote a strong tower, a fortification. Or we recall the word "force," which is again a use of the same root. Our word "comfort" comes from the Latin "confortare," to strengthen together.

There are, no doubt, times when we need to be soothed and consoled and when the best service we can do for a friend in affliction is to give him sincere sympathy. But Paul is here writing of the building of the church. In that great enterprise the function of our faith is to cheer us up, to encourage us, to incite us and arouse us to a common purpose. Religion has been the power by which life has been joined to life and the weak have been made strong, not so much because it is the medium of pity, but because it is an agency of cheer, arousing men out of the weariness of disappointment to the conceiving of high enterprise, the courage of expectancy, and the confidence of hope.

III. "Fellowship of the spirit."

One of the most poignant confessions of the barrenness of science without faith is to be found in the writings of George John Romanes, the great British naturalist of the nineteenth century and friend of Darwin, who said, "When at times I think, as think I must, of the appalling contrast of the hallowed glory of the creed which once was mine and the lonely mystery of life as I now find it—at such times I shall ever feel it impossible to avoid the sharpest pangs of which my nature is susceptible."

Life is always a mystery, but to the Christian it is never a lonely mystery. The psychologists nowadays have a great deal to say about the dislocated life. They talk of maladjustment and the need of integration. All this means that we must have something by which we shall be bound together in the bundle of life with others, and with the source of life. Reduced to its simplest terms, this means fellowship, common causes, united effort, the sense of belonging, and above all, communion with God.

To greater or less extent, we may find some of these things in the ordinary associations of business, sport, and social life. Experts in the training of the young insist that boys and girls should be encouraged in team-play. In later life, it is in response to an instinctive need that men and women join lodges and identify themselves with various social movements. The reason is that we must identify ourselves with others, we must have common loyalties, obligations and ideals. The fellowship of the cocktail hour where people come together merely to pass time is, after all, a lonely business and is a pathetic testimony to a deep and unsatisfied human need.

Whatever criticism we may offer concerning the church, we must see that a common allegiance and pledge to the noblest ideals the human mind has ever conceived must be the best of cures for the restless individualism in which multitudes of people spend their lives. To have a few friends, to go now and then to some social function, to belong to a club, these things are not enough. Our lives must be integrated with the lives of others in some cause that is great enough to command us through all the years, in all circumstances and all places.

IV. Compassion.

When we read in our English New Testament, "If any bowels and mercies," or in the Old Testament, "My reins shall rejoice," we should substitute the word "heart." With us moderns, the heart is, figuratively, the seat of the affections, love, and compassion.

It is the heart quality, that kind of compassion that we call "humanity," that the apostle celebrates in the chapter beginning, "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal." We are told that Jesus looked out upon the weary and hungry multitudes and had compassion on them because they were like sheep having no shepherd.

The Christian church has always been a great enterprise of compassion, even as it has always been a centre of indignant pity. Whenever the Christian church has been misled in its zeal for definitions of the divine, it has been saved by its compassion for the human.

We are bound one to another in a great enterprise of humanity. We are bound together by a common consciousness of our own needs and the common obligation to minister to the needs of others. Thus the great fellowship of the church has endured through the centuries and, despite all difficulty, will endure through centuries to come. We are not all alike, but we are like-minded. We have diversities of gifts and even of convictions, but we have the same spirit. No man or woman may say that he or she is temperamentally unfitted for the Christian life, for it is the glory of the Christian faith that it has bound together all the diverse elements of human personality, uniting them in a common aspiration and binding them together in a common task. It is in this that we may have hope that the ideal of the apostle will be at last fulfilled, when racial abhorrences and national hates will pass away and there shall be neither Greek nor Gentile, bond nor free, when one shall be the Master of mankind and all men shall be brothers.

It is thus that the Apostle sees his Christian friends of Corinth cemented together in a church so united, so built together, that it will be a veritable body of Christ. It is thus that he hopes and prays, "by the encouragement of Christ and the incentive of love, by the fellowship of the spirit and the compassion in your hearts, ye shall fulfill my joy, being like-minded, having one love, being of one accord and one mind."

Advent Sunday.

THEME: *What Is Coming To the World.*

GLENN RANDALL PHILLIPS, D. D.

TEXT: Luke 1:78-79.
HYMNS: "On Jordan's Bank, the Herald's cry. . . ."—*Alstone, L. M.*
"Comfort, comfort ye My people. . . ."—*Freu Dich Sehr, O Meine Seele,* 17, 87, 77, 88.

The opening chapters of the New Testament bear the deep imprint of a cradle on their pages. When God wants to get the attention of men He puts a baby in the center of the picture. And we are told that whatever gets our attention finally gets us! When God wants to improve the conditions of this world He doesn't start with a new program. He starts with a new personality —a baby. "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulders, his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."

What is coming to the world? Not wreck and ruin, but re-creation, not

merely a new program but a new power, not merely condemnation but transformation, not new laws but a new love, not night but morning, not death but life. All this will come by way of personality shot through and through with the divine impulses. Therefore we are summoned to be used as was John the Baptist, to act ever and everywhere as stars of the morning, heralds of the coming Day, pointing men to the sunrise. These are the key words in such a career: Light and Peace.

"To shine on those who sit in darkness." We are to be guardians of the Light and bearers of the Light, for their sakes! Where there is the darkness of intellectual confusion and moral chaos, the Christian light should be as the clear shining of the morning star. It should challenge and arouse the conscience of the individual and of society. It should speak in terms of a new dawn, revived hope and stedfast purpose! The message of the morning star is a message of life. Life wars with Death. We are to be life-bringers. We are to be advance agents for a new interpretation of human existence. "Those in the shadow of death" does not always mean those who momentarily face the end of physical existence! It may mean those for whom life has no longer any real meaning. There is no content. There is no enriching motive, no far shining goal. Take these out of life and the shadow of Death falls cold across the path! As followers of One who said, "I am the Life," "I came that ye might have life," we are to be sharers of the more abundant life. We are to be announcers, heralds of the vivid, vital fact of its presence, power and availability. Anything that enlarges the area of that life for humanity, we are for. Anything that hinders, limits or crushes that life, we are against, if we are truly Christian! There is no question where the champion of the abundant life will stand in the struggle against the domination of forces of greed, whether apparent in vice-controlled politics or the economic dynasties of "robber barons" and provocative, chip-on-the-shoulder war preparedness programs, maneuvered by the Merchants of Death! Bringers of Light and Life we must be to all who sit cowering in the shadow of death.

Peace is the other key word. The Morning Star is to guide into the path of peace. It is an invitation to reconciliation. That begins within the heart of the individual. There can be no peace where there is lack of unity. Where there is division there cannot be harmony, and by so much there cannot be freedom. There is no spiritual liberty apart from inward peace. Who has the answer? Who except the One to whom we point as the Son of Righteousness? Truly, "He is our Peace." There is no healing for our wounded spirits or for our divided and warring world except as we find it in Jesus Christ. What is coming to the world? Fascism? Communism? New and more frightful war madness? For a time, yes, in sections of the world, perhaps. But—not to remain! The advent message is one of hope and glad anticipation of the sunrise of a new Christ-ruled day. "His glory is coming over the hills of time."

> "Red Caesar, take your banners down,
> Nazarene, lead us on,
> In every city, street and town,
> We hail your whiter dawn."

Christmas says that Dawn is coming to our world.

PRAYER

O Loving Father, banish Thou the hopelessness from our hearts, and fill them with faith and trust in Thee. Help us to put aside the things we see and hear about us, and flood our consciousness with the certain knowledge of Thy constant and never-failing presence here—transforming that which is corrupt into that which is chaste and pleasing in Thy sight; staying that which has strayed from the path of righteousness and giving a second chance.

Help us to realize that we are not able to judge that which is pleasing in Thy sight, so far as events in the world are concerned, and teach us to accept that which seems filled with foreboding for the human family in the same faith and trust as we accept that which seems good and wholesome to us. Help us radiate faith in Thy wisdom and love. We ask in Jesus' Name. Amen.

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

Christian Love.

LESSON: Lev. 19:17, 18, 33, 34; Deut. 6:4, 5; Matt. 22:35-38; John 3:16; 13:34, 35; I Cor. 13. Print John 13:34, 35; I Cor. 13:1-13.

GOLDEN TEXT: "We love, because he first loved us." I John 4:19.

DEVOTIONAL READING: Psalm 145:9-21.

INTER. & SR. TOPIC: Christian Love.

Y. P. & ADULTS: Christian Love.

The teacher should emphasize clearly the definition of Christian love. Christian love is maintaining toward all individuals everywhere an attitude of undiscourageable good will and being willing to express that good will at all times and places and under all circumstances in terms of the keenest self-sacrifice. Notice that there is nothing sentimental in Christian love. When Jesus tells us to love our enemies it may seem an impossible requirement. Indeed, it is so if we think of it and define love in terms of that feeling which we have for mother, father, child or brother. There is not involved, necessarily, any sentiment in the exercise of Christian love. There is involved a stern exercise of the will. Let the teacher go over the definition word by word and emphasize it and explain it. Defined in this sense *it is possible* for us to love our enemies.

In the classic passage of our lesson today the great Apostle writes his description of love.

In the Scripture text Paul had been speaking of the miraculous gift of tongues, the ecstatic speech with which Christians were sometimes endowed in those days. He turns now to that more precious gift, namely, that of love. It is love alone which links a man with God and gives divine significance to what he says and what he does. The literal translation of verse 3 is, "if I give away all my property in mouthfuls" doling it out to prolong as far as possible the exhibition of my beneficence. We have Paul's Psalm of Love, a beautiful impassioned utterance in the form of Hebrew poetry, rythmical and exalted. Love's first attribute is patience, the patience which is more than mere endurance, which rises into active kindness. True love is without

envy but enjoys seeing others possess good things and win high honors. True love is engrossed in admiration and in the excellencies of others. It is the foundation of good manners, of graciousness and of politeness. It guides social intercourse when it is on the highest level, and promotes the most beautiful conduct. The Greek word appears in our English word "paroxysm." The Christian will oppose evil but he will not make his opposition to wrong a matter of personal anger or pique. While he hates the wrong he will cherish love for the wrong-doer. This is very high doctrine and is difficult of attainment. Our tendency always is to attach our dislike for an evil deed or an evil system to those who are connected with the deed or bound up in the system. Love will not take account of evil. That is it will not bear a grudge. It does not say, "I will forgive but I will not forget." On the contrary, it will gladly erase the wrong done from the account book and start a clean ledger. Love is heart and soul with every true cause because only as such causes triumph will mankind whom it loves so ardently be happy and prosperous.

EVENING SERMON

THEME: ***The Prayer Habit.***

WILLIAM S. BOWDEN, D. D.

TEXT: "Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry aloud: and He shall hear my voice." Psa. 55:17.

HYMNS: "What shall I render to my God . . ."—*Chesterfield, C. M.*
"Come my Soul, thy suit prepare. . . ."—*Pleyel's Hymn,* 77, 77.

The second coming of Jesus Christ is set forth in the Word of God as the great objective of the Christian hope. The grand truth of the Second Advent should constantly be proclaimed, but never as an abstract theory. Our Lord Himself coupled with that truth the injunction to watch and pray. The hope of His coming should stimulate in the heart the prayer habit. Those who have known God best, all down through the ages, have had the prayer habit.

David had the prayer habit. In the text before us we are given a glimpse of his inner life. The secret of his close fellowship with God, of his joy in life and his sweet trust and confidence in the face of every danger, every difficulty and every experience is discovered in

This Bit of Autobiography

which he here gives us. In another place the Psalmist declares: "My voice shalt Thou hear in the morning, O Lord: in the morning will I direct my prayer unto Thee, and will look up." Or, as the revised version puts it, "Will keep watch."

The morning watch with prayer is the ladder by which the soul may climb to the Divine presence and there obtain the needed strength and grace and guidance for the duties of the day. The noontide rest with prayer is the calm, peaceful, refreshing breath of God coming to the soul in the fever and struggle of the daily conflict and giving new hope and new vigor and new purpose to the life. The evening quiet with prayer is the gentle, soothing

influence stealing over the soul and drawing it away from the things of time to the things of eternity, and causing it to rest in simple trust in the Father's care. "Evening, and morning, and at noon" David would withdraw himself from the active, busy scenes of life and alone with his God he would hold sweet and restful and helpful fellowship with Him.

Oasis of Prayer

Think you this thrice bending of the knee and the lifting of the heart to God was the perfunctory obedience to duty's stern call? Think you that the early morning watch and the noontide rest and the evening quiet with God alone were seasons trying and unenjoyable? The traveler over the dreary desert waste of sand, with burning heat and blinding light, looks forward with joy to the refreshing under the sheltering shade of the palms and by the cool, gushing spring which is to be found just ahead on that bit of green and verdant oasis. The children of Israel rejoiced with exceeding great joy when, after the weary marches over the waterless and treeless and rocky desert, they came to Elim where were wells of water and inviting shade and lucious fruits. Think you that the traveler dreads the oasis rest and refreshment? Think you that Israel's hosts found the hours at Elim too long and tedious and unrefreshing? Nay, for the oasis and Elim were places of refreshing, of rest, of joy and blessing, and the places of preparation for the onward journey, and the oases and Elims of prayer are the places of refreshment and rest, and encouragement and preparation for the duties of life.

The Secret of Prosperity

The Christian cannot prosper and make progress toward the promised land which God has given as a heritage to His children, unless the soul comes to these refreshing places, to these oases of prayer. They should be set in the journey of the everyday life, so that the shades of the evening hour, as they draw down and shut the light of day from view, will find the soul encamped by the side of the reviving and quickening springs of water of God's presence. There the soul may rest in safety until another day calls the pilgrim to take up his journey. Then the morning watch may be set. Then the soul may drink deep and long at the well of prayer, and gain strength and encouragement and guidance for the journey of the day. And at noon the soul should turn aside from the bustle and strife and struggle of life and seek out the oasis of prayer. There, as nowhere else, it may meet its God, may tell Him its hopes, its trials, its failures; may unburden itself, and may obtain new inspiration and strength and guidance for the afternoon's duties and cares and responsibilities.

The Overwhelming Testimony of Scripture

Daniel with the multitude of responsibilities of statecraft resting upon him, with the problems of the great Babylonian Kingdom demanding his attention, found time, three times a day, with his windows open towards Jerusalem, to seek his God in prayer. Nay, rather, it was a privilege and

necessity, this thrice daily communion with God, if Daniel was to continue the wise and successful statesman and governor that he had proved himself under the leading and direction and blessing of God. It would take not a little time to show how full the Scriptures are of precept and example, enforcing the importance and necessity of prayer. It is indeed an interesting study. In this study the example and teaching of our Lord Jesus Himself should not be overlooked. But in spite of the overwhelming testimony of Scripture and of those today who have proved again and again the power and efficacy of prayer, how prayerless are the lives of many of God's children.

What Profit Shall We Have if We Pray Unto Him?

This is the question which Job declares the wicked ask. We do not wonder that the people of the world can ask such a question, or that they can go through life utter strangers to the true heart prayer which reaches God—for there is much so-called prayer which never gets any higher than the head of the altar rail or the pulpit or the vaulted ceilings of the church which echoes the sound thereof. But that there should be those of God's children who in their hearts ask the question, if it is not framed with the lips: "What profit shall we have if we pray unto Him?" seems almost incredible.

A True Story

I heard the story, a true story, of a little boy Christian and his joy in receiving answer to prayer. He was trudging along with a heavy basket upon his arm. It was a lonely country road and darkness was falling fast. Home was yet a long way ahead. He tugged at the basket and struggled on until it seemed to him as though he would drop. What could he do? Well, he might have done a good many things. He might have sat down and cried. He might have grown cross and impatient. Ah, how many of us would under like circumstances? But he did not. He was a little Christian who prayed, and when he got into a place where he did not know what to do he would talk to Jesus about it. So he set his basket down by the roadside, and kneeling behind some bushes, asked help to get home. He was so absorbed in his little prayer that he did not hear the carriage on the soft turf road draw near the spot and then stop. His prayer ended, he came out to begin again his weary tramp homeward, and there before him was a carriage waiting. The driver had seen the basket and stopped in wonder. And as he saw the little boy come from the bushes he invited him to ride with his basket into town. And the prayer was answered. Think you it would have happened so, prayer or no prayer? Perhaps. But there was a prayer and answer to prayer. It was the prayer habit that brought the little boy to his knees. It was God who brought circumstances to pass which answered the prayer. And it is in just such little experiences of life where God wants us to talk with Him and ask His guidance and help.

Form the prayer habit, and your life will be filled with peace and joy which come from a sense of the fellowship of God and His over-ruling care and providences. With David let us say: "Evening, and morning, and at noon will I pray, and cry aloud, and He shall hear my voice."

MID-WEEK SERMON

THEME: ***Do We Ever Get Away with It?***

TEXT: Psalm 103:10; Romans 5:20.

"Getting away with it!" Schoolboy bluffing in classes. Employee shirking work. Player disobeying rules. Always means something not straight. Eventually never get away with it. In larger sphere of living, do we ever get away with it? *"It?":* Theologically, Sin. In life, wrongdoing. No matter how smart, still wrong. No argument in gross sins: murder, theft, impurity. Need to widen definition of sin: "Anything not in keeping with spirit of Christ." Fear: there is an intelligent fear, based on knowledge. Fear to do wrong. But fear, when we do not know what we fear, dread of what a day may bring forth. Basically, a distrust of God. Anger: the measure of a man is "the size of the thing that gets his goat!" Hate: breeds vindictiveness, unwillingness to forgive and forget, accompanied by desire "to get even." Acquisitiveness: desire for possessions; apt to breed all the others. Something of good in all of them, but uncontrolled, dominating the life, become evil, unchristian.

We Never Get Away with It: Because these things controlling us kill happiness. Fear brings worry, and worry saps the strength, physical, mental and spiritual. Anger has violent and poisonous physical reactions. Anger begets anger. Our anger defeats the very purpose of our anger. Hatred has similar poisonous effects on body. Garner to Winchell: "I am well because I sleep well, and I sleep well because twenty years ago I stopped hating anybody." We become hateful. Acquisitiveness also brings its punishment. Only commonsense to strive to possess something for future needs. Danger of desiring more than enough, destroying sense of responibility for others. We never get away with it!

The Grace of God: Salvation begins with the realization of danger and the determination to put these things away. The grace of God is like the spring sunshine causing the flowers to grow. Fear is supplanted by trust. Anger is swallowed up in toleration. Hatred withers and love blossoms. Acquisitiveness yields to stewardship and brotherliness and generosity and kindliness. This is what Christ came to make clear to us.

TOPICS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE'S SOCIETIES

CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR: Y. P.—Christian Virtue. Forgiveness. Matt. 6:12, 18:21-35. Jr.—Providing Homes for Orphans. Mark 10:13-22.

WALTHER LEAGUE: November Topic, College Education. Service Project. Plan a student night at your Church. Arrange for short talks on school experience, especially information that may help others to choose the right school.

DECEMBER, FIRST SUNDAY

CALL TO WORSHIP: "Who shall not fear, O Lord, and glorify Thy Name, for Thou only art Holy, for all the nations shall come and worship before Thee."
PSALM: 24.
PRELUDE: Intermezzo—*Mascagni.*
ANTHEM: The Great Day Of The Lord—*Chaffin.*
OFFERTORY: Litany—*Schubert.*
POSTLUDE: Prelude In C Minor—*Bach.*
OFFERTORY SENTENCE: "Now, to him that worketh, the reward is not reckoned as of grace, but as of debt."
OFFERTORY PRAYER: We come to Thee with a portion of Thy bounty and beseech Thee to accept these gifts for Thy service. Thou art the Giver of all things, and we are but Thy stewards."
BENEDICTION: Peace be to ye and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

SERMONS

THEME: ***One Generation To Another.***

THOMAS YATES, D. D.

TEXT: "He shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to the fathers." Mal. 4:6.

Many hopes had been disappointed when this prophet, whom we call Malachi, spoke and wrote, and some spring seemed to have broken in the spirit of men. There arose a man to speak for God to this time, and he is called simply "My Messenger."

He was sure that there was a way out of this stagnancy and disillusionment because he was sure that God had further light and leading. The day would come when He would send a new and authentic voice to speak a new utterance of God. "I will send you Elijah once again," he cried, in the Name of the Lord.

It is the note which always characterizes the true prophet. He is never a man who feels that he and his time have run up a blind alley, and reached a melancholy finality. God keeps man on the move, and every seeming ending is another of God's beginnings. "He hath sounded out His trumpet that shall never call retreat." God has always His further man and messenger, bringing some new truth or some new application of old truth. There is a stirring when he comes. He and his message set in motion conflicting currents. If his message be authentic; that is to say if it be the recognition and proclaiming of a new fact, or of a forgotten set of facts, his message will clash with ways of thinking already established, and with traditions honoured because they are venerable. There is a ferment whenever time begins to make ancient good uncouth. There is a division, and opposing camps.

Tradition and Progress

In every age when this happens, there is always one line of division. It is between those who are rooted in the old order because they have been born and bred into it, and those who are conscious of no such rootage. It is the division between those who have fitted their minds and lives to an older

view of things, and those who have made no such adjustment, nor see reason why they should. It is the line of division between maturity and youth, between the fathers and the children, using those words not in the sense of kinship but of time. No two generations have the same horizon line. There are those who have seen much of life, and have had to face its problems for themselves. They have learned many things through struggle and discipline. They have shaped their lives and moulded their minds within the framework of the mind and outlook of their generation. By their side are those who have life still to face, and are eager to meet it untrammelled. If it is to be a battle, they want to use their own weapons in it. They prefer the few stones they have rooted out for themselves to any sword of their fathers, even though it be as the sword of Goliath.

These two apply different measurements to things—to ideas, people, institutions. A new current cuts into the world's life with the coming of the new generation. They misunderstand each other, even when there is entire goodwill. Those who cling to the old look uneasily at those who keenly espouse the new; and those keen on the new sniff at those who anchor themselves in the old. This is what happens in every changing generation, and in periods of stress it is accentuated. I could read you the words of a philosopher who wrote seventy years before Christ, and they are angry words about those who will neither think nor act as he himself has been trained and accustomed to. If I read his words to you, the older people here would say: "Well said!" The younger people would say: "Same old tale!"

Precedent and Adventure

What then is the dividing line? One of these classes is most conscious of the worth of tradition. It hates to see ideas and ideals which may claim to have stood the test of time grow disregarded. It says: "Stand by what has stood the testing of experience." The other looks on the past as a ladder to be safely and wisely kicked away when its purpose and use to lead a few steps up is accomplished. One is sure that wisdom is justified of precedent. The other is sure that it is justified only of adventure.

Why should we think that something so inevitable as this clash of generations is a curse? It is no curse, but the condition of progress. Each class is afflicted by its own error. Ruled by precedent and tradition, directed by use and wont alone, life falls into apathy and stagnation. Freedom and adventure which ignores garnered experience means poverty of spirit and a waste of effort and endeavour in following paths long ago seen to lead only into sand and thorns. We dare not allow one of these to nullify the other. There is, surely, a principle in life which covers both. Let me indicate the line upon which this principle is found. Let us begin with what should be a point of agreement, namely, that we are seeking together the interests of life, of fuller life, of life in movement, achievement and progress. We have to test everything, whether old or new, by its relation to life. We must get things into their "setting in life"—to borrow a phrase now much in use in a new approach to the study of the Gospels.

There are then two considerations to be submitted. The first is that the

principle of life is no other than the tradition of life. When Goethe discussed the making of great literature, he said that there were two conditions essential for its creation—a good head and a good inheritance. He meant by a good inheritance that the flowers of literature owe as much to the leaf-mould in which they are rooted as to the immediate sunshine in which they lift up their heads. What is true of literature, is true of life itself. There is a stored experience of our race. Much as the individual is, he counts for most when he realizes the solidarity and continuity of human experience.

> Awhile consider,
> The souls of near two thousand years
> Have laid up here their toils and fears,
> And all the yearnings of their pain.

Old Paths to New Things

The second consideration is that the tradition of life has no vitality except in its determination towards, and contribution to, development and betterment. There was a great prophet of the Hebrew people who once said to his people: "Thus saith the Lord; Stand ye in the ways and see, and ask for the old paths, and walk therein." It is a deeply significant thing that this admonition came from the one religious reformer of his day—an agitator who gave neither king nor priest nor people any rest, but was the mouthpiece of progress to a stolid generation. If ever a man was a thorn in the side of the old-fashioned it was Jeremiah the prophet. It is this man who said: "Ask for the old paths." But why? It was because he was convinced that it was along these paths that life for his people could move out and on to finer things. A path is not a place to lie down upon. "Walk in the old paths," he cried. When Paul stood before Jewish governors he made one of the ringing defences of all history, and this was what he said: "After the way they call heresy, worship I the God of my fathers." When the Church of Rome threatened John Wycliffe, he said: "When you have made Christ a heretic it is a small matter that ye make me, His follower, one." Blessed be any heresy which comes out of loyalty to Christ, and out of an experience which has bred impatience with forms and phrases and ways which conceal instead of expressing His sovereign reality. The religion of Jesus is a way of life and a spirit of life. It lays the cross of Christ on the heart and conscience, but it lays no fetter on the mind. Believe that this is now an age of God, and that He speaks to the listening.

Cannot we hold these two things well together? Surely it is what we have to do. I do not want to forget that I live in an old world. It is apt to be an expensive form of forgetfulness, and I cannot afford it. I have not so much time given me that I can spare much of it for experiments with life, which may turn out on inquiry to have been worked out, and worked through, to their issues long before me, and from which I might have learned wisdom, and saved my time and strength. Fontenelle said: "How many foolish things we should say now, if the ancients had not said them all before us." I want to add to my eagerness and determination to adventure, some judgments upon values, and to be able, if I can, to know when I see it, what is permanent from what is passing, and what is divine from what is precariously human.

The Sense of History

Individual adventure and initiative come to little unless they move out from the sound base of inherited experience and achievement. I recall some words of Sir Josiah Stamp, spoken to young men and women: "The thing we want most of all is a reverence for old established movements, for the ability, the endurance of spirit that went to make them what they are. Don't dismiss things because they have their roots in the ancient past, but rather believe that, because they have stood the test of time, there must be, all appearances notwithstanding, something real and enduring in them." These were wise words spoken by a forward-looking man to eager youth.

You cannot leap off your own planet. You cannot jump away from your own history. Suppose a forester, determined to have a tree alive throughout, proceeded to cut out the core, which looks as if it had ceased to live and which is the legacy of the growth of the past, what kind of a tree would he have? It is easy to say: "Let us have nothing but what is actually growing now, and which will grow to-morrow," but the formative material and the formed material are alike essential to the tree. Do not strip off old ideas because you are not able for the moment to reconcile them with new findings. We grow poor if we forget our ancient humanity, just as we grow sterile if we lose our belief in the power and possibilities of life. Behind us is a vast history, and we are here to do our part in bringing to pass something better. If you ask what I think is the most essential thing for sure, sound and courageous progress in individual and social life, I answer: "A sense of history." If you ask me what is the most common defect, which has brought to futility so many once vigorous and promising new ventures in thought and action in political and religious life, I answer: "The lack of a sense of history." Human society and the social order is not a machine, as Marx and so many of his conscious or unconscious followers assume—a machine functioning badly and therefore to be scrapped. Human society is an organism. You may and can divert its life in directions and to ends unthought of before. But scrapping is killing without resurrection, or a hope of newness of life. Hail to the prophet who is a breaker of idols! Give him allegiance open and eager, and make his arm stronger by lending him yours. But refuse allegiance to the mere desecrator of shrines. Covet and culture the spirit of discernment which can distinguish between these two, even though each may claim to be a prophet.

Seek a clear mind about essentials and main issues. Test things by their bearing upon, and contribution to, life, character and destiny. There are countries where the old roads are all lost. Earthquakes and volcanic convulsions have effaced them. In older days those roads now lost were made by men who read direction in the stars, and who knew that, however fallible was the human instinct the heavens changed not, but were God's abiding facts to guide the wandering steps of men. Many old paths are to-day broken and gone, and more are going. But the man who knows the heavens, and can turn his face to the stars, will go safely by the light of the eternal facts. He will go as safely as ever did those who relied on a man-made road to keep them in the way. Earth's upheavals do not alter the abiding facts, and there is a God who guides though human tracks be gone.

Our little systems having their day,
They have their day and cease to be:
They are but broken lights of Thee,
And Thou, O Lord, art more than they.

Let youth and age, fathers and children, together keep in mind that Christ, His truth, His law, His spirit, His love, His kingdom, have light enough to lead, wealth enough to satisfy, wideness enough to hold the changing fronts of the world's thoughts, the new sharpened hungers of man's progressive life, the claims of the world's quickened conscience. Deeper loyalty to Him will reconcile old and new, and will turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers. For to every generation He, who is the Way, the Truth, the Life, says: "He that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."

—*Christian World Pulpit.*

Second Sunday In Advent.

THEME: ***The Word Becomes Flesh.***

RICHARD K. MORTON, D. D.

SCRIPTURE: John 1:1-14.
TEXT: "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us." John 1:14.
HYMNS: "O Word of God Incarnate. . . ."—*Munich,* 7s, 6s, 81.
"Lamp of our feet, whereby we trace. . . ."—*Knox, C. M.*

One summer Sunday I preached at a vacation resort, and afterwards a man told me how closely my topic had happened to come to him. Within a few months he had lost a brilliant son in China, where the young man had labored tirelessly as a physician among the poorer classes. A "treasure chest" had finally been sent back home to the father, and it contained piles of receipted bills and other evidences of the self-sacrifice of that devoted servant.

Here is indicated the way in which the Word of God becomes flesh—as the Spirit works in men and women everywhere for the good of mankind. This is the kind of argument to which any scoffer must listen; this is a power to which the most indifferent must react.

This is the great way whereby we can make the Word become flesh and once more dwell among us.

In an issue of the Commonweal I read not long ago of the fine project conducted in Chicago where a "youth hotel" is available for young men who have been paroled from some penal institution. The director even secures the parole, provides a sponsor, and often sees that the youth gets a job and a completely new start in life. How many young people through this method have come to feel that indeed for them the Word of God had become flesh once more.

Religion is at least in part a process of incarnating the spirit of Jesus—of making something concrete which had been only abstract, of personalizing something that had been impersonal, and of giving reality to something fanciful. Jesus embodies and brought to contemporary life again precepts

and powers that were there in Judaism and in the life of His time, but which had become inactive. "In Him was life; and the life was the light of men," says the prologue of John's Gospel.

God revealed Himself and became flesh in more ancient times, in the seers, kings, and prophets of old. He found an incarnation in some part, among those later on, whose records are in our Bible. Finally, in the fullness of time, He took the form of a man completely and revealed Himself in His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. He became flesh, and dwelt among us.

The Word must again become flesh, *in us.*

Talk does not succeed in dealing with the supreme issue: namely, how to help people everywhere incarnate the spirit of God.

The Word does not and cannot become flesh to many while serious abuses and troubles go unheeded. Not long ago, I saw an item of those in Australia who, lacking other means, live in abandoned sections of huge piping which had been left from a public project. I have read elsewhere of serious conditions among our Negro, Jewish, and Italian friends. Madame Chiang Kai-shek writes with passion, urgency, and strong polemic against Japan in her Harper volume, "This Is Our China."

Professor Wilhelm Pauck wrote in a recent issue of the Harvard Divinity School Bulletin that the Christian religion rests on the incarnation of God in Jesus Christ. We stand with him on that foundational belief, and add that only as this great conviction reaches fruition in lives that are themselves incarnations of the divine spirit do we have the power possible in our faith.

As we meet, a new society is being outlined to deal with what science, philosophy, and religion, acting together, can do for democracy and for the establishment of better modes of living. All thinking people expect much from it. But there are so many chances that men will get distracted to other and lesser pursuits. As someone has revealed, a great Cunard liner was pulled dangerously off course because someone, in installing a new stove in the pilot house, had driven a nail too close to the compass.

As Professor Phelps said, "the purpose of education is to develop personality, not just to produce people who have ideas or information." In a survey, some time ago, it was found that in a large number of job failures, the discharge had come not for lack of skill or physical causes, but rather from some personality defect. Many of these were obviously rooted in the failure of someone else to do his full duty in brotherhood and helpfulness. The Word of God must become flesh again if our faith is to live and to conquer; The best evidences for Christ are still Christians. The only vision that many will have lies in what they see in your face and mine. The only building of the kingdom which many will notice is what they see built by your hands and mine.

Out of the love and grace of God He sent His Son to take the form of man —and that is the great miracle of love. But He also made it necessary for us likewise to cause the Word, through us, once more to become flesh—and that is the greatest privilege and task which can come to the Christian.

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, speak Thou through us, not only during the worship service here, but among little children, among the aged and discouraged, among the wayward, among the sinful, and to those who play and work with us and live in our homes. Open Thou the channels in our hearts so Thy Word may be made flesh according to Thy will and the place of Thy chosing. Help us to see one another as endowed with Divine life, and deal with one another according to that understanding.

We ask in Jesus' Name. Amen.

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

The Nature and Work of the Church.

LESSON: Matt. 16:13-20; 18:15-20; Acts 2:37-47; 8:1; 9:31; I Cor. 7:17; 12:4-31; Gal. 1:13, 21-24; Eph. 1:15-23; 4:1-16; 5:25-27; Rev. 1:10, 11. Print Acts 2:41-47; Eph. 4:11-16.

GOLDEN TEXT: "Christ also loved the church, and gave himself up for it." Eph. 5:25.

DEVOTIONAL READING: Revelation 21:9-18.

INTER. & SR. TOPIC: Why We Love the Church.

Y. P. & ADULTS: The Nature and Work of the Church.

There are three definitions of the word Church: the building, the invisible church, the individual church.

The teacher should emphasize what the Church is *not*. It is not a social nor benevolent organization primarily.

What the Church *is*. It is the only institution in the world founded and sustained by the Holy Spirit.

What the *work* of the Church *is*. 1. To minister in the name of Christ to the world, and bringing people into relationship with Him. 2. To nourish Christ's people and to build them up in faith and comfort.

How does the Church discover Christ's people? By the use of four great resources: preaching, prayer, loving friendship, and high example.

Ephesians 5:25-27 speaks of a glorious Church. The teacher should emphasize the fact. 1. That the Church is glorious in its origin. It originated in Heaven, in the councils of God. It was not human-made as was Solomon's temple. It is not an organization like a box but an organism like a tree. Read Romans 8:28-31.

2. The Church is glorious in the material out of which it is built. Regenerated people, a temple of living stones. See I Peter 2:5. This temple is made up of those created in the image of God. Twice-borne men like Magdalene and Peter. It is composed of those who are "called out." See John 6:39. And its members are all volunteers. There are no conscripts.

3. The Church is glorious in its ordinances. Baptism. The Lord's Supper. 4. It is glorious in its commission. It stands in the middle of the infinite purpose of God. It is commissoned to win His people to Himself. 5. It is glorious in its power. Not political power but spiritual power. 6. It is glorious in its destiny.

EVENING SERMON

THEME: ***Water of Life.***

CLARENCE EDWARD MACARTNEY, D. D.

TEXT: Rev. 22:1.
HYMNS: "I lay my sins on Jesus. . . ."—*Aurelia,* 7, 6, 7, 6, *D.*
"I know that my Redeemer Liveth."—*Bradford, D. M.*

Amid much that is grand, strange, enigmatic, terrible and beautiful in the Book of Revelation, here is one thing which we can all understand and appreciate, for it makes its appeal to all, the River of Water of Life that John saw, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.

But to understand and appreciate fully this beautiful metaphor, one must know something about that part of the world in which John lived, and which is the background of the Bible, a comparatively dry and waterless land where rivers are scarce. Here, in our western world rivers are taken for granted as a part of the landscape. They afford refreshment and amusement, generate power to turn the wheels of factories, serve as channels of commerce, and carry off the superfluous rainfall. But in the East the river is manifestly the creator of life. "Everything shall live whithersoever the river cometh."

A River of Water of Life! How full of meaning that is to a traveller in the East. There you have sharp contrasts,—arid deserts, bare hillsides, yellow mountains; but where the river flows there is shade, coolness, greenness, fruits and flowers.

It is for this reason that this verse from the Book of Revelation, a River of Water of Life, keeps sounding in the ears of him who travels through the East. He comes to understand the beauty and meaning of this metaphor used by John in describing the city of God. Metaphor? Who knows that it may not be more than a metaphor. But of this much we are sure. We have here a description of a heavenly divine and happy state of life. Proceeding out of the throne of God, there flowed through the city a River of Water of Life. Let us sit down for a little on the banks of this river, and resting under the shade of the trees, ask ourselves just what this River of Life means.

I. Faith Comes from God—Centers On God.

This river proceeded out of the throne of God. Faith comes from God. It is the gift of God. The Apostle in one of his passages writes, "But not all men have faith." One ought not to be disturbed by that fact. One ought not to let the lack of faith in others cloud faith in one's own life, for faith is the gift of God. If you have faith, thank God for it, and hold on to it.

There is no conception of God save that which faith supplies. This river came out of the throne of God. God is the central, enthroned power in this city. That men have believed is the most convincing argument for God, an evidence that is unassailable. Who but God Himself could have created the idea of God in the mind of man? After all arguments for the existence of God have been stated, still the soul must know God and believe in him by faith.

"That which the mind receives,
By proof is small.
That which the soul perceives
Is proof of all."

In the Biblical thought of life, the life of the individual and the life of a divine commonwealth, God is on the throne, and all blessings proceed from Him. It goes without saying that this idea of life seems to be at a discount today. In the plans and schemes of many of the so-called leaders and educators and molders of public and private opinion, God has little, if any, place. The river which is supposed to bless the city flows from any source but the throne of God. What have the world dictators today to say of God, or of man's obligation to God? God does not appear to be in all their thoughts. Hence the feeling of hopelessness that prevails, the cynicism and pessimism as to the future, and all over the world men are looking either to Communism or Fascism as the inevitable fate, or misfortune.

The loss of faith in God is as marked and deplorable in the life of the individual as in the life of communities and nations. Where there is faith in God there are no standards or principles, save those of desire and convenience, for how could any standard, any principle of life have power and authority unless there is faith in a God Whose Will is supreme and Whose Word is law? Therefore it is that multitudes are living without any regard for law or standards, save that of their own passions or desires. In so far as the popular literature of the day reflects popular life, it certainly displays men and women out of whose life and thought God has faded, and who have set themselves up, their own passions and desires, as the only true God. But where life is what it ought to be, what it can be, and what God intended it to be, it is watered by the river of faith in God.

II. Satisfactions, Blessings and Influence of Faith.

One of these is what we might call the benediction of rest and peace. One always thinks of that when one comes upon the gardens and orchards where some river has made the desert to blossom like the rose. So the life which has faith has depth to it. It has a place of refuge from the heat and stress of the day.

Again, faith gives courage in the midst of the perils and storms of life. With faith we can confront the world. See how Paul did that when he exclaimed that neither death nor life, things present nor things to come, could separate him from the love of God in Christ Jesus. How often Christ used that expression, "Fear not," "Be of good courage." But without faith in Him, without faith in God, that is impossible. We are not promised exemption from the perils and dangers and temptations of life, for in this world, as Christ said, we shall have tribulation. But what we are promised is victory through faith. "Greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world."

A third blessing of faith is illumination. This River of Water of Life which came from the Throne of God was clear as crystal. Pure water illuminates and reveals, and never obscures. So it is with faith. It is a river of water that is as clear as crystal. By faith we can see and understand

what cannot be seen in any other way. What could we do with life, and how could we endure it, how could we face its ofttimes grim facts unless we could look at life, the facts of life, through the glass of faith? "Faith," Emerson wrote, "draws the poison from every grief, takes the sting from every loss, and quenches the fire of every flame." And only faith can do it.

Faith is the source of hope and joy. The Apostle describes men who are without God and *without hope*. That is true. There can be no real sense of God or knowledge of God without faith, and there can be no hope without God, and there can be no true joy without hope. We seldom stop to consider how much of the joy and satisfaction of life depends upon hope, and how hope springs out of faith in God.

> "Hope is the rainbow to the storms of life,
> The evening beam that smiles the clouds away,
> And tints tomorrow with prophetic day."

How the great Psalms and other familiar passages of the Bible sound this note of courage, endurance, hope and joy, because the soul puts its faith in God. "God is our refuge and strength." "The Lord is my light and my salvation, of whom shall I be afraid?" "Hope thou in God." "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want." "When thou passest through the waters I will be with thee, and through the rivers, they shall not overflow."

Faith not only blesses the life of him who believes, but through him it blesses other lives. "If you have any faith," said Goethe, "give me, for heaven's sake, a share of it. Your doubts you may keep to yourself, for I have plenty of my own."

Faith is the most beautiful and the most powerful thing in the world. It exerts a greater influence than anything else you can name or know.

The Bible lays great emphasis on this aspect of faith. The Gospels tell us that when Christ saw the faith of the four men who had borne the paralytic into His Presence, He healed the man. Their faith had a mighty influence with Christ. Paul speaks of his hope to meet Christians at Rome, so that they can encourage one another "each by the other's faith." Never have any doubt about that! If you have faith you are a useful and influential member of society. Where you may never expect it or know it, your faith may influence and help and strengthen others.

In one of our great hymns we recognize the influence which is exerted by redeemed souls in heaven.

> "And when the strife is fierce, the warfare long,
> Steals on the ear the distant triumph song,
> And hearts are brave again, and arms are strong."

That is beautifully true. But it is also true that men and women of God who have faith, influence us and strengthen us and cheer us and that not only out of that invisible City of God which is to come, but here, in this life, long before they have won the victor's Crown of Gold, or joined that distant triumph song, by their example and their faith they uphold our arms and bid us trust in God.

The trees which grew on the banks of this River of Water of Life yielded their fruit every month. There are some trees which do not yield their fruit

even in their natural and appointed season. But here is a tree, watered by the River of Life, which yields its fruit every month. Faith speaks to all circumstances and conditions in life, in plenty and want, in sorrow and in joy, in victory and in defeat, in youth, manhood and old age. Sometime ago, sending a greeting to the church and his brethren in the ministry, a distinguished minister and theologian, not far from the end of his journey, and who had lost the sight of his eyes, wrote: "I wish I could be present at the meeting to which you refer, and see my old friends face to face. But, alas, my eyes have finished their work and been discharged from duty. Faith, however, still remains, and I sometimes say in soliloquizing silence:

"The want of sight she well supplies,
She makes the pearly gates appear,
Far into distant lands she pries,
And brings eternal glories near."

A beautiful tribute that to faith! Yes, when all else goes faith still remains. Not only when the sight of the eye has failed, but when the sight of the mind has failed; when the mind can neither know nor understand what is happening and why it happens, faith supplies the want of sight and brings eternal glories near.

Hold on, then, to faith, the greatest thing in life. Ever pray, "Lord, increase my faith," for faith is the victory by which we overcome the world.

In this beautiful vision of St. John, the river of faith, the River of Water of Life, proceeded out of the Throne of God and of the Lamb. "And of the Lamb." Let us not forget that. For the Christian faith reaches its climax when it rests upon the redeeming work of Christ upon the Cross. The throne of the Lamb is the Cross upon which He died for our sins. Put your faith in Him as the Saviour, the Lamb of God Who taketh away the sins of the world. That is faith at its highest, the faith which fortifies life against temptation and blesses it under all conditions and circumstances. He who has this faith, this "gift of gifts," can then sing,—

"O happy, happy, that I am,
If thou canst be, O faith,
The treasure that thou art in life,
What wilt thou be in death?"

MID-WEEK SERMON

THEME: The Need of Patience.

TEXT: Hebrews 10:6; Luke 21:19.

Definitions: 1. The quality of suffering without complaint; meekness. 2. Endurance and perseverance. 3. Forbearance; leniency. 4. Power to wait quietly.

Patience with Ourselves: There is a readiness in us all to excuse ourselves. Yet we have our times of discouragement and depression. "What's the use? What's the matter with me?" Let us remember: We have intelligence, and we can develop and use it. We are essentially decent, and we can resist temptation. The law of averages is with us. Ty Cobb in a batting slump:

"I go in and keep swinging. I know the law of averages is with me." We are dear to God.

Patience with Others: We are especially short of patience with family circle and intimates. Impatience of age with youth, of youth with age. Also with mankind generally: elections; governments; labor; big business. We need to gather understanding and sympathy. Out of these comes wisdom. Helping us with others it will help us with ourselves. Others are much as ourselves. Majority essentially decent and honest. They mean to be kind: Red Cross drives, etc. Many are simply thoughtless and careless, "even as you and I." People are sheep-like, they often follow poor or bad leaders. They have their troubles too. Check ourselves against above. Jesus to Peter: "When thou art converted—."

Patience with God: "Why doesn't God interfere?" The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is good and kind. He is personal, and takes a personal attitude towards us. He has set forces in operation for our good; the greatest of these came with Jesus. God has his agents, and they are men like ourselves; we may be his agents. God has his time and times. Old negro shoeblack in Virginia to John Hutton, during first World War, "We must give God time to get round!"

TOPICS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE'S SOCIETIES

CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR: Y. P.—The Bible, God's Word to Us. Ps. 19:7, 119:72, 97, 103; Hebr. 4:12.
Jr.—How Can we share our gifts? Acts 3:1-11.
WALTHER LEAGUE: December Topic, Your Community. Pride in your community. Our dependence on others. Team work.

FOR THE BULLETIN BOARD

How long would you be safe in a country without churches?
Not how long but how much you live.
Making a living does not mean making a life.
It matters not where we stand but which way we face.
Things that just turn up have a way of turning one down.
Burbank was right. A weed need not forever remain a weed.
Step up. You can't pull Him down.
Faith still moves mountains.
Good intentions pave the way up as well as down.
That which costs us little, we esteem little.
Tight places are full of loose characters.

DECEMBER, SECOND SUNDAY

CALL TO WORSHIP: "Great and glorious are Thy works, O Lord God, the Almighty; righteous and true are Thy ways, Thou King of the ages. Who shall not fear, O Lord, and glorify Thy name?"
PSALM: 42.
PRELUDE: Solemn Prelude—*Noble.*
ANTHEM: Te Deum—*West.*
OFFERTORY: O Beautiful Jesu—*Stainer.*
POSTLUDE: March Triomphale—*Wachs.*
OFFERTORY SENTENCE: "Give unto the Lord thy God according as the Lord thy God hath blessed thee."
BENEDICTION: "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your Spirit."

SERMONS

THEME: *Christ's Challenge To a Desperate World.*

HARRY W. STAVER, D. D.

TEXT: Isaiah 55. John 12:44-50.
HYMNS: "What cheering words are these . . ."—*Bethlehem, S. M.*
"Jesus, Saviour, Pilot me. . . ."—*Pilot,* 77, 77, 77.

"The day is gone when you can slap a discouraged, disillusioned or defeated fellow on the back and say, 'Be a man,' and by any such procedure restore him his soul." That utterance came out in a recent conversation I had—a conversation that ranged through the area of apathy such as is characteristic of the hopeless to the realm of rebellion such as is typical of the desperate.

A writer of some note, in one of the magazines, weighing the needs of men in their relation to this whole matter of discouragement, hopelessness and social maladjustment, concludes that what such individuals need supremely is "someone, or something to believe in, to love and live for." Another relates his experience on the occasion when he was to speak to a gathering of down-and-outers in a New York Bowery Mission. It was a motley company of men, men with dull eyes and dreamless souls; dirty, ragged, unkempt men without hope in the present, without faith for the future. And this is what is related: "As I stood looking at the men gathered in that Bowery Mission I knew that what they needed most of all was something that would take them by the scruff of the neck and shake the elements of their being into a new alignment."

It takes patience and love and sympathetic understanding and a positive procedure if the kind of individual we are speaking of here is to be helped. It requires a new outlook on life, a new motive and purpose, a new spirit and heart. Such a person must be "born again," become a "new creature," not in any narrow, theological sense but in the depths of his whole being—body, mind and soul. As one thinks of these needs reaching far beneath and beyond the mere surface of things, one remembers the word of the Apostle Paul borne on the wings of his own experience: "If any man is in Christ Jesus, he is become a new creature."

None exceeds Christ, nor equals him, in the knowledge of what discouraged, hopeless and unhappy people need in order to live courageously,

hopefully and happily. None exceeds Christ, nor equals him, in the knowledge of what our perplexities and problems demand in order to solve and settle them in the right way. None exceeds Christ, nor equals him, in the knowledge of what men must do in order to be saved out of their distresses. That knowledge which is in Christ, he has not concealed from us but declared openly and plainly in his life and teaching. This is the condemnation on our civilization, the "judgment" that rests on man and his modern world, that "the light is come into the world and men loved the darkness rather than the light for that their deeds were evil."

Ours is a dark world. It is a dark world, filled with the dark doings of men, because "the light that is in us is darkness." As the Master said, when "the light that is in us is darkness, how great is that darkness!" The sin of which man is supremely guilty, and for which man now suffers, is not any minor or trivial physical transgression. It is sin against "the light." What the Apostle Paul wrote concerning the Romans, in the hey-day of their degeneracy, we are duplicating in our degenerate day. This is what Paul wrote, in the first chapter of his letter to the Romans: "Knowing God, they glorified him not as God, neither gave thanks, but became vain in their reasonings and their senseless heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, in that they exchanged the truth of God for a lie and worshipped and served the creature rather than the creator who is blessed forever." The consequence of that attitude and conduct the Apostle also declares, and this is his declaration: "Forasmuch as they refused to have God in their knowledge, God gave them up to a reprobate mind to do those things which are not fitting." Ours is a dark world and there is one supreme reason why it is dark: men love the darkness rather than the light because their works are evil. As long as men thus love the darkness we shall have darkness.

A second fact to note concerning our immediate world is that it is a disillusioned world. It is a disillusioned world because so many of the things in which we have trusted, on which we have relied and for which we have labored, have been swept away like a house in a cyclone. It is not so long ago that we believed a golden age was dawning for man. Savagery was discredited. Civilization was come. The leaders of the people gathered in council, drew up sacred pacts and signed them. We would "beat our swords into plough-shares and our spears into pruning-hooks," dismantle our guns, disband our armies, scrap our battleships and "learn war no more." It was to be a grand world, a world like the old prophets in Israel dreamed, a world wherein the wolf would lie down with the lamb. But the leaders of the people left God out of their considerations, left justice out of their arrangements, left love out of human relationships. So savagery is come back, like the seven devils that returned to the unoccupied house in the parable of Jesus. Violence, brutality and hate now sweep the world with the besom of destruction. Is it a strange thing that ours is a disillusioned world of people desperately weighing the situation and wondering whether there is anything anywhere we can believe in or pin our faith to?

A third fact about our world to take into account is that ours is a dying world. It is a dying world because we have despised and rejected the supreme

things by which men can live. "Man doth not live by bread alone," said the Son of Man, "but by every word that proceedeth from God." We have laughed to scorn that saying of Jesus. We have discounted it and disregarded it and disobeyed it. We have acted, and continue to act, as if it were the impractical and fanatic utterance of a man who knows nothing about life, whence it is or in what it consists. Where has our chief concern been in our relatively recent past? On what has our chief emphasis fallen and our chief effort been expended? The whole picture is one of amazing material achievement. Almost unbelievable comforts have been created and undreamed of benefits and blessings have been bestowed upon us. It is all a tribute and testimony to the genius and greatness that is in us. But we have erred in our way in this, that we have not been as concerned for the things that are divine as for the things that are dust. We have left the emotions unguarded, the impulses uncurbed, the will undisciplined, the inner life untended. Is it to be marvelled at that now the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse, War, Famine, Pestilence and Death, ride through the earth or that the vials of Revelation are poured out upon us? It would be strange and a thing to marvel at, in any moral universe and any scheme of perfect justice, if men were permitted to violate every law of life and transgress every commandment of God and get away with it.

It was to a dark, disillusioned, dying world that Jesus first spoke his glorious Gospel of hope, light, love and life. It is to a dark, disillusioned, dying world that he now speaks his challenge and tells his triumph. What is his challenge and the triumph he tells? He worded it when he was here in the flesh in words that never pass away. This is the challenge he speaks to discouraged men in a desperate world: "Follow Me." This is the triumph he tells: "He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness," in disillusionment and despair, "but shall have the light of life." He shall "know the Truth and the Truth shall set him free." That is the challenge of Jesus to our world today. It is the one way of victory that is open to men who would be delivered out of their distresses. It is the thing humanity must do if it would be crowned and not consumed.

Third Sunday In Advent.

THEME: ***Getting Christ Back Into Christianity.***

S. EDWARD YOUNG.

TEXT: "I am come, a light unto the world; that whosoever believeth in me should not abide in darkness." John 12:46.

HYMNS: "In the Cross of Christ, I glory . . ."—*Rathbun,* 8, 7, 8, 7.
"Jesus calls us, o'er the tumult. . . ."—*Galilee,* 8, 7, 8, 7.

When history comes to analyze why it was that in our day, the forces of evil were so powerful and the counter forces of good so weak some analyst, I venture, will say, "This was the reason." Wrong was personalized. It was incarnate in human flesh. The doctrines of ruthless power, of persecution and of bloodshed had their Hitler, their Mussolini, their Stalin, in whom they were given a human face.

"But good had no face in the popular imagination. The ideals of peace,

of love, of brotherhood and justice were disembodied spirits, as vague and intangible as the mist. It was a very personal Hitler against a very vague faith—a substantial club whose only opposition was a shadow. Not to be wondered at that evil seemed robust and the right weak and powerless."

To be sure this is not the first time in history that wrong has a man to represent it, while good has no equivalent contemporary figure. But there is this difference. In other times in Christian history if no contemporary figure was available, men laid hold upon a very personal Christ. By an imaginative faith and devotional life, they transported him from ancient Galilee to stand strong and radiant before them, as real as their next door neighbor, closer than a friend, or brother. Wrong may have had its Caesar, but Christians had their Christ.

By and large our contemporary liberal Christianity has lost this sense of the presence of Christ. We began the process by scrutinizing the life of Christ, rightly enough, through the lenses of our scientific age and suspecting the miracles.

Then having applied our scientific knowledge to the life of Christ, we began divorcing Jesus from the creeds and dogmas wrapt about him, dogmas and creeds that seemed to us to obscure his personality and his teaching. We said to ourselves, "We will find our Christ in the Sermon on the Mount rather than in the Apostles' Creed."

See now, we have gone one step farther.

Sometimes with intent, sometimes quite unconsciously, we have divorced the ideals and teachings of Jesus, from Jesus. Listen in on contemporary liberal preaching and you hear much about what Jesus taught, but little about Jesus.

If this trend of detaching Jesus' teachings from Jesus is evident in preaching, it is doubly evident among laymen. See us moralizing with Christian ideals quite apart from any consciousness of Christ.

Let one small segment of this fact, serve to illustrate the whole. When we are attempting to teach our children to do what is right, is not our argument often purely on moral grounds? "John, you ought to do such and so for it is the decent, manly thing to do. Society expects it of you. You will be rewarded in the end." No, we do not often encounter liberal parents today saying, "John you ought to do this for Jesus asks it. It is what he wants you to do."

If so placing our moral life on the basis of loyalty to Jesus sounds effeminate and sentimental, listen to Sir Wilfred Grenfell, manly adventurer beyond any of us here today. "This is my religion, to do my surgery as Christ would do it, my navigation, my investigations, my study of the new problems which confront me." Aye, Grenfell not only had ideals but he had a leader to crystalize them. We liberal Christians are making a great mistake in not giving our children such a leader. The enemies of Christianity are wiser. Nazisim does not moralize, "Do this, for it is the decent manly thing to do." Not at all. Rather, "do this, for our Leader wants it."

The importance of a personality, a face, attached to our ideals becomes evident when we consider history. So inevitably interwoven with a leader are the important events of history that scholars often deal with history in

terms of names. The age of Alexander the Great, the age of Pericles, in Greece, the age of Julius Caesar,—and American history is Washington, Jefferson, Lincoln. Burton Hendrick, who has written one of the best books on the Supreme Court, says of the Constitution, "The Constitution like everything else is first of all a biography." And we could add, "so too is religion." It is Mohammed, Gautama Buddha, Confucius, Christ. Where religion is strong it is immersed in and enamored of a personality.

In our lesson this morning we read these words, of Jesus. "I am come, a light, unto the world, that whosoever believeth in me should not abide in darkness." Yes, depersonalize our faith, set up moral standards and leave out the magnetic personality of the man of Calvary and our moral and religious life slips into darkness. The light is no longer there. Depersonalized and abstract ideals cannot conscript loyalty when loyalty is difficult.

We cannot fall in love with a shadow or embrace a mist, not when it is going to cost us something. Here is where modern Christianity is losing the battle of loyalties in so many places today. German Christianity for example became over-intellectualized. It's morals became detached for many, from the personality of Jesus. Then along came Adolph Hitler. The Churches preached abstract ideals, National Socialism preached Hitler. And when a cause without a leader runs squarely into a cause with a leader, it is lost. Tradition has it that it was a face that launched a thousand ships. History or fable, only a face can conscript the loyalties of men. Tulsi Das, the great Indian thinker, summed up the bankruptcy in Hinduism in these words, "The worship of the impersonal laid no hold upon my heart." Even so, and let the bankruptcy of Hinduism become the bankruptcy of our Christianity, yours and mine, and in the days ahead we will find our loyalty to the Christian faith slipping more and more.

John Cournas in his 'Open Letter to Jews and Christians' writes, "A Rallying cry is necessary, a human figure, with a maximum of Humaneness, the other extreme of the world offered by the Mussolinis, the Hitlers and the Stalins. We must answer the challenge of Hitler's 'Mein Kampf' with the counter challenge of that other struggle, the struggle of Jesus to establish a free spiritual kingdom on earth, founded on mercy and love." How profoundly true . . . a human figure is necessary. A rallying cry that has even a chance to overcome Hitler must be a rally cry that has the towering figure of the Christ.

When our forefathers talked and sung of Jesus as the saviour of the world, the redeemer of the hearts of men, it was more than sentimentalism dragged out into the open. It was hard headed thinking too. For here in Christ the best that we know is crystalized in a personality, given a human face to conscript men's loyalties. "I am come, a light unto the world, that whosoever believeth in me should not abide in darkness."

Again, getting Christ back into our Christianity brings our Christian faith down to earth, makes it conscious of the stern realities of life. Christian idealism separated from Jesus easily becomes naively optimistic. It argues in this fashion: these truths are self-evident, love is better than hate, peace than war, unselfishness than selfishness, everybody must see that. It cannot

happen in this fundamentally good at heart world, that these truths should be denied.

So abstract Christian idealism argues and is totally unprepared and confounded in our modern world, where peace is consumed in the glorified fires of war, faith in human kindness lies strewn in the debris of London streets, and selfishness is given the title "legitimate national self interest" and extolled and the heralding of the ideal of love is drowned in the raging winds of prejudice and propaganda. Indeed the tragic events of this brutal day have wrought havoc with those whose Christian faith was the Sermon on the Mount abstracted, from the life that preached it.

Then let's get Christ back into our Christianity. See how much more realistic it becomes. The Sermon on the Mount gets a background of a cross. Writes John, "He came unto his own and his own received him not." So—the more gentle he was, the more brutal his opposition, the greater his love, the more hate rose up to meet him until selfishness and pride nailed him to a cross. "Born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried," so goes the creed, a creed that does not obscure the ideals of Jesus as we have thought, but illuminates them with the stern realities of life. Christian faith and Christian living will always be difficult, time and again evil will seem to be the conqueror, and the cry will rise in our throats, "My God, my God, Why hast thou forsaken me."

Aye, when the Sermon on the Mount gets a background of a cross, we are not so confounded and unseated by the sins of our day. When peace is consumed in the fires of war, and love is lost in a world of hate, we say, "This is just the kind of world we should expect. These are the stern realities of life."

But if getting Christ back into our Christianity gives stern reality to our faith, it also gives hope and confidence. This is the good news, a gentle, loving, peaceful life came off the conqueror in the end. Had we been there 19 hundred years ago we should have said, "This man is no match for Caesar, lovely yes, the incarnation of the best that we know, no doubt, but totally defenseless before a world of brutal men."

But today that ancient Caesar is buried beneath the shifting sands of obscurity, while this Christ goeth before us like the morning star of hope.

Indeed putting human flesh on idealism is often an encouraging experience. Love appears to have no armor, till you make it flesh in St. Francis of Assisi. Unselfishness treads the earth with trembling footsteps till you give it the feet of David Livingstone. Feeble gentleness, how very feeble until it gets its Lincoln, and then the very stars in their courses and all the evil in men's hearts are seen powerless to prevail against it.

Who has inherited the earth anyway—the Pilates, the Herods, the Benedict Arnolds? Not at all. They won the first battle, perhaps, but not the last. The last battles belong to the Platos, the Augustines and Bonifaces, the Calvins and the Wesleys, the Edisons and Pasteurs. Not the men who destroy but the men who build, inherit the earth.

I recommend this medicine for discouragement. Take your ideals into the shadow of the cross that they may become realistic. That's where the purest that we know fell into the hands of the worst that we know. And

then hear Jesus saying, "Be of good cheer for I have overcome the world."

Get out your Bibles and read the gospel stories. The while not losing our critical faculties let us not be afraid of the words, "Lord," "Redeemer," "Saviour," with all the full sweep of their spiritual meaning. If millions of men use those words to describe Hitler and other millions to describe Mussolini and other millions Stalin, why in heaven's name should we be intellectually afraid to apply those words to Christ.

"Behold I stand at the door and knock. If any man hear my voice and open the door I will come into him and sup with him and he with me." All over again our Christian morals will be given a living presence and a leader and this hour will not be Hitler against the faint voice of confused ideals, dreaming on better things to come, but Hitler against Christ, and for that reason a far more encouraging hour. "I am come a light unto the world that whosoever believeth in me should not abide in darkness."

PRAYER

O Lord Jesus Christ who has died for us, that whether we wake or sleep we should live together with thee, be thou our Strength every morning and our rest when the shadows of the evening lengthen. In the busy world, and in our beating hearts there is a dumb cry for thee and men wander to and fro listening for thy footsteps. Enter in and possess our hearts, O Lord. Make our inner life a sanctuary of thy presence.

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

Christian Stewardship.

LESSON: Matt. 25:14-30; Luke 16:9-13; 18:24-30; I Cor. 12:2; II Cor. 8:1—9:15. Print II Cor. 8:1-9, 9:6, 7.

GOLDEN TEXT: "It is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful." I Cor. 4:2.

DEVOTIONAL READING: Psalm 92:1-5, 12-15.

INTER. & SR. TOPIC: Using What We Have for God.

Y. P. & ADULTS: Christian Stewardship.

The teaching of stewardship is one of the most important in the entire circle of Christian truth. To many men it may seem ridiculous to make spiritual blessing depend upon the giving of money. But the question is, has faithfulness in the stewardship of money anything to do with getting the Church right spiritually? Is it merely a fruitage of the spiritual life or is it part of the process by which the spiritual life is produced and developed? If any man doubts that there is a vital relation between the stewardship of money and spiritual religion he must argue it out with God. There are many who will say that stewardship means the proper investment of talent, of time, etc. and will minimize the emphasis which is placed upon money. It is perfectly true that stewardship *does* include all of these other things but it is *also true* that it does *include money*, and no stewardship is complete or

honest which neglects the money angle. Now the entire teaching of Christian stewardship rests upon four great cornerstones. 1. Creation. God is man's Maker. God did not resign His own claims upon man nor his possessions. "We are not our own. He hath made us. We are His people and the sheep of His pasture." Let the teacher read to the class David's wonderful prayer in I Chron. 29:11-16. 2. Providence. Constantly the writers of the Old Testament refer to it, celebrating the Providential care of God over His people. Moses reminded Israel that God cared for her in the wilderness.

Jesus translates God's care into personal terms. We do not give sufficient thought to the constant Providence of God. 3. Redemption. God has redeemed His people. Constantly the Old Testament writers hark back to that night in Egypt when the Angel of Death passed over the houses marked with blood. Over his desk John Newton kept this word—"Remember that thou wast a bondsman in Egypt and the Lord thy God delivered thee." Paul emphasizes it. "Ye are not your own. Ye are bought with a price." Peter enforces it. "Seeing that ye were redeemed not with silver and gold but with the precious blood of Christ." 4. Love. Creation, Preservation, Redemption—these are three of the stones upon which God rests His claim and the fourth is the love of God. Back of the creation was the love of the Creator's heart, yearning for an answering love from His creatures.

Now ownership on the part of God involves a complimentary relationship on the part of man. That relationship is best expressed by our Lord in the terms of stewardship. While God gave man dominion over the works of His hands and gave Israel command over Canaan He retained His place as owner. "The land is the Lord's" is the word in Leviticus. In Jesus' parables the thought is constantly expressed and beautifully emphasized. God is the King, the Master, the Husbandman, who places the servants over His possessions, and commands them to take care of them, to use them, to increase them, but only as faithful stewards. "Occupy till I come." That is the command. A steward is a trustee. He does not own the property he administers, nor does he administer it for his own advantage. He is the representative, the agent of his master. He must seek first of all his master's advantage and his master's approval. The recognition of this principle is one of the great needs of our time. It would do more to solve the world's industrial problems than all the laws on our statute books. It would do more to heal the breaches between capital and labor than all the commissions that could be appointed. All that a man has is God's and he is himself only a steward. Christian men and women certainly should recognize this fact.

Now, the tithe is a recognition. It is perfectly clear in the Old Testament that God required such a recognition in the law of the tithes. The tithe is a definite acknowledgment of God's ownership and man's stewardship. The law of the tithe has not been abrogated. Its principle is eternal. God is the Owner, man is the steward and man must acknowledge his stewardship and upon this acknowledgment rests the support of religion among men. A man's obligations to God under the Gospel are not *less* but rather *more* than under the law. One of Christ's flashing questions is applicable here, "What do ye more than they?" "Except your righteousness shall exceed the

righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees ye shall in no wise enter into the Kingdom of Heaven."

The needs of the Kingdom in our generation are beyond computation. When a Church decides to obey God in the matter of the tithe and expression of Christian stewardship, the work of the Kingdom will go forward. Until that time His displeasure will rest upon it.

EVENING SERMON

THEME: ***Jesus Misunderstood.***

J. G. F. BLAESI, D. D.

TEXT: "Art thou he that should come or do we look for another?" Matt. 11:3.
HYMNS: "Faith of our Fathers, living still . . ."—*St. Catherine, L. M.*
"We would see Jesus. . . ."—*Felix,* 11s, 10s.

Ever since the romance of man has been turned into bitter tragedy by the entrance of sin into the world man has been scanning the horizon for one who might restore peace and happiness to mankind. Down through the ages the people hoped and prayed. Then in the fullness of time God sent to a weary and war torn world the One of whom it is written, 'God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.'

However, the tragedy is that when He did come, some, and among them John, asked the question, "Art thou he that should come or do we look for another?" If there was anyone who knew Jesus, John did. He had baptized Him, witnessed for Him, pointed his disciples to Him and said of Him, "Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world." With the eyes of a discerning faith he had seen in Him the One of whom the prophet spoke, "He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our sin was upon Him and with His stripes are we healed. All we like sheep had gone astray, we have turned every one to his own way and the Lord laid upon Him the iniquity of us all."

Yes, John had personal knowledge of Jesus.

In addition he had the courage of his conviction. For this he was admired even by Herod, who invited him to preach at his court. He merited that admiration, not because he was willing to flatter at the expense of truth, for he rebuked Herod's sin. The distinguished Einstein once said, "Beware of flatterers whose heart is filled with bitterness." No, John did not gain admiration by flattery. He had the courage to do his duty as God gave him the light to see his duty. John doubted Jesus because he misunderstood Jesus. John was perplexed by the work which Jesus was doing in the world. John preached the Christ who was to rescue His oppressed people and enable them to put their foot on the neck of the oppressor. His conception of Jesus was physical rather than spiritual. He looked for a victory such as physical weapons could achieve. He could not rise to the realization that the supreme victory is the one wrought by those weapons that are spiritual and not carnal.

The great tragedy of today is not racial, economic, politic, financial, it is a misunderstood Christ, whom God sent at the blessed Christmas time to

redeem the world from all hatred, selfishness, injustice and inhumanity, national and international. People like John, fail to realize Christ's method of work and His great purpose in the world. Christ is not here to win a victory over the powers of darkness through physical force or traditional hatred and revenge. He is here to make the appeal of love, of sympathetic understanding instead of misunderstanding, of reason instead of human insanity, expressed in bitterness, cruelty, hatred, persecution, boycotts, oppression and war. He says in Matthew 5, 43-48, "Ye have heard that it hath been said, thou shalt love thy neighbor and hate thine enemy, but I say unto you, love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father in heaven, for He maketh his sun to rise on the evil and the good and sendeth rain on the just and the unjust. For if ye love them that love you, what reward have ye? Do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? Do not even the publicans so? Be ye therefore perfect even as your Father in heaven is perfect."

If men listen to that appeal, God wins. If they refuse, He loses so far as they are concerned. When the Jews pray what they call the Disciple's Prayer, when we Protestants and Catholics pray the Lord's Prayer and say, "Thy Kingdom Come," we must remember that Christ's kingdom can come in but one way and one way only and that is through the yielding of our hearts to His appeal of divine love.

It would be a fine gesture on the part of the United States to invite the best representatives of all nations to gather around the table to discuss in a reasonable, humane and brotherly way, mutual grievances, needs and problems. At such a gathering, God's and not simply man's guidance should be sought, for when man listens God speaks and when man obeys God works. We still have sufficient faith left to believe that man guided by God can remake the world so that there *will* be peace on earth and good will among men.

MID-WEEK SERMON

THEME: ***When God Stops a Man.***

TEXT: Acts 9:1-3.

Christian history without Paul! Thirteen books missing from the New Testament; the course of history different; progress of the Gospel delayed. "God needed an unusual man for an unusual task!"—E. W. Work.

Saul: An Hebrew of the Hebrews: Born in Tarsus of Cilicia, and proud of his city. Highly educated: at the feet of Gamaliel. Intensely religious with the fervor of the Law: "The zeal of thine House hath eaten me up!" The persecution of the Christians. The campaign to root them out: scattered from Jerusalem. Larger, more radical plans. Saul selected as leader. On to Damascus!

Paul: The Bond-Slave of Christ: When God stops a man it means either that man's salvation or his destruction. Saul already disturbed by martyr-

dom of Stephen. The intense light on the Damascus Road. It passed through his eyes, blinding them, and reached to his heart illumining it. It was the power of God breaking through bigotry and prejudice and stubbornness. The voice of Jesus: "I am Jesus." Not a declaration of Messiahship, not the Christ! But the heart and mind of Paul jumped to the great meaning of the Resurrection. On regaining his sight he "straightway preached Christ."—v. 20, 22.

The Humble Agents of God: Even the New Testament, reflecting our human nature, perhaps, centers on the great names, and passes over in silence, or with just a word, the humble men and women who had a part in making the great. Judas and Ananias, two despised names; two men who shed honor on these names.—v. 10-18. History is full of such cases. John Trebonius? The teacher of Martin Luther. John Egglen? Preached the sermon that led to the conversion of Charles H. Spurgeon. Joel Stratton? A young lawyer, temperance enthusiast, who won John B. Gough. Edward Kimball? He led Dwight L. Moody to Christ.

TOPICS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE'S SOCIETIES

CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR: Y. P.—Reading the Bible with Understanding. Neh. 8:1-9. Acts 17:1-12.
Jr.—Christmas in Song and Story. Matt. 2:1-11.
WALTHER LEAGUE: December Topic, Your Community. Methods of Social Control. Institutions in the Community.

FOR THE BULLETIN BOARD

You have to stand to aim high, regardless of where you hit.
Roosevelt said to do what you can, where you are, with what you have.
The ebb tide always speaks of the flow.
Be tolerant enough to tolerate the intolerant.
Not what you possess so much as what possesses you marks your life.
The bare feet are the ones that feel the thorns.
What is right needs no alibi.
Without aim the mark is rarely hit.
Willing and wishing oft divide between success and failure.
Falling for everything many stand for nothing.
Opportunity has no regular time-table.

DECEMBER, THIRD SUNDAY

CALL TO WORSHIP: "I will sing of the loving kindness of Jehovah forever; with my mouth will I make known Thy faithfulness to all generations."
PSALM: 19.
PRELUDE: Morning—*Grieg.*
ANTHEM: Send Out Thy Light—*Gounod.*
OFFERTORY: Distant Chimes—*Shackley.*
POSTLUDE: Postlude in D—*Donahoe.*
OFFERTORY SENTENCE: "They that know Thy name will put their trust in Thee."
BENEDICTION: "Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and forever. Amen."

SERMONS

THEME: ***The Birth At Bethlehem.***

KENNETH G. ROGERS.

TEXT: "Unto you is born a Savior." Luke 2:11.
HYMNS: "A Great and Mighty Wonder. . . ."—*Kocher,* 7, 6, 7, 6.
"Hark! What mean those Holy Voices. . . ."—*Trust,* 8, 7, 8, 7.

This is a strange Christmas! We Americans are enjoying a highly successful season judged solely on a commercial basis. More merchandise has been sold this year, and more letters and packages have passed through our post offices than in many previous years. Yet in Europe war is being waged on all fronts. A London boy closed his letter to Santa Claus by saying, "I hope you haven't been bombed." It is incongruous, I know, but our joyous Christmas carols form the obligato accompaniment for Europe's jarring war news.

Under such circumstances I tried to imagine how Christmas would be observed this year. I am sure it will be kept in the usual fashion. I know some will stay in bed and get a much needed rest. They are physically worn out from the holiday rush. But isn't it a pity that our observance of Christ's birthday should work such a hardship on a few people? Then there will be those who are wholly indifferent to the deeper meaning of Christmas. They never give religion much thought during the year, why should they do so at Christmas time? These people will exchange gifts with their relatives and friends, and then Christmas will be over for them. There will be another group who are openly antagonistic to all that the Church and Christmas represent. They are trying to live by a philosophy which admits of nothing which is divine or idealistic. But there is yet another group—they are in our churches this morning—who still feel that Christmas has a definite relation to religion and worship. They will try to rediscover the Christ in Christmas.

As I thought of these distinct groups, it occurred to me that at his birth and during His lifetime Jesus was met by these same three attitudes: Indifference, Antagonism, and Devotion. There is first the group represented in

The Inn At Bethlehem

It is recorded in Luke 2:7 that Mary laid her child in a manger, not because Joseph and Mary were poor and could not afford better accommoda-

tions, but because "there was no room for them at the Inn." I realize that many sermons have been preached on this text censuring the action of the Innkeeper. Yet I do not believe we can hold him entirely to blame. Amos R. Wells has written a splendid apology for the Innkeeper in his poem: *The Inn That Missed Its Chance.* The landlord is speaking:

"Could I know
That THEY were so IMPORTANT? JUST THE TWO,
No servants, just a workman sort of man,
Leading a donkey, and his wife thereon
Drooping and pale,—I saw them not myself,
My servants must have driven them away;
But had I seen them,—how was I to know?
Were Inns to welcome stragglers, up and down
In all our towns from Beersheba to Dan
Till He should come? And how were men to know?
There was a sign, they say, a heavenly light
Resplendent: but I had no time for stars,
And there were songs of angels in the air
Out on the hills; but how was I to hear
Amid the thousand clamors of an Inn?"

The tragedy of the situation lies in the fact that all through His life Jesus was crowded out. There was no room for Him or His message. And when at last He died, He hung on a cross, in the air, as if earth still had no room to hold Him. The people of Bethlehem on that first Christmas could not guess that this was to be a night which would change the dating of all subsequent history. But the calamity is that many of them never knew all their lives that a King had been born in their midst. "He came unto his own and his own received him not." (John 1:11.)

I sometimes wonder if we are doing much better. There are people living today in complete disregard of the teachings and life of Jesus. As far as they are concerned, He never existed. He has been crowded out by the pressure of other interests. Doubtless legitimate things are taking their attention, but they are crowding Him out entirely. Let us ask ourselves, "What have I done with Jesus?" "Have I given Him room?" I like that hymn by Emily Elliott which begins:

"Thou didst leave thy throne and thy kingly crown
When thou camest to earth for me;
But in Bethlehem's home there was found no room
For thy holy Nativity.
O come to my heart, Lord Jesus,
There is room in my heart for Thee."

Another group of people who welcomed the Christ child that first Christmas is represented by

Herod

We are told in Matthew 2:13 that "Herod sought the young child's life." But Herod wanted to kill the young child. For every Christ ideal born into the world, you may be sure there is some Herod waiting. Now Herod was afraid of this baby because he knew that babies have a way of growing up. If he could have been assured that this child would have remained a baby, he might not have feared. He was afraid of the future—afraid of what

that child might become. So he tried to kill Him in His cradle. Kill Christian ideals while they are young and then you'll not have to deal with them full-grown, is a philosophy which is as modern as today.

Russia and Germany are out after this Christ to kill Him. Russia is openly teaching children from the kindergarten age up that there is no God. The idea of God is a delusion, they say. In Germany the leaders have tried to Aryanize Him. They are trying to make Him a loyal German citizen and His words a support for the present regime. In America I am wondering if we are not commercializing Christ out of Christmas. Not that I object to beautiful store windows, and the purchasing of gifts during this season. We would certainly be much poorer without them. But if this is all there is to Christmas, we have lost the most vital part. One merchant who was shown Christmas advertising folders which he was considering using for his business, objected to them on the ground that they were too religious! Let us never forget in all our merriment that we are celebrating the birth of Jesus!

Once in a while each of us meets an individual who would like to do away with the whole Christmas celebration. There are not many of this group, but even a few are significant. In December, 1927, the former Homiletic Review printed a Christmas letter written by a Mr. Harold Roland Johnson which read:

"To All My Relatives and Friends:

"The modern Christmas is swiftly passing the premise of both spirit and meaning of old Yuletide, and is now actually a day of much worry, distress, sorrow and ill-will.

"Christmas is viciously commercialized by dollar-mad business men, and good, well-intentioned people are helpless victims of their conscienceless avarice. 'Peace on earth and good-will toward men' has ceased to express today's Christmas attitude.

"For these sufficient reasons—and others—I am taking Christmas off my private calendar. Hereafter, I will discontinue the custom of offering gifts or other Christmas tokens, and consequently request you all to do the same with me. Your greetings will be heartily appreciated and welcomed at any other time."

In dispensing with the Christmas observance this man was losing something of real importance. I think we lose something when we become so sophisticated that we no longer look up the chimney to find Santa Claus. When we lose elves, and fairies, and dwarfs from the front yards of our homes we have lost a precious possession of childhood. When we can no longer see the Heavenly Star and hear the Christmas Angels, we are poor indeed. Christmas would call us back to these spiritual realities. There is a poem which begins

> "Oh grown-ups cannot understand
> And grown-ups never will
> How short's the way to fairyland
> Across the purple hill."

Perhaps this is one reason why Jesus said, "Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven."

(Matthew 18:3.) He would insist that we give proper recognition to spiritual things. But modern Herods are stealing about seeking to kill them.

Another group interested in the birth of the Babe in Bethlehem were

The Wise Men And the Shepherds

The Wise Men from the East were looking forward to the coming of a Deliverer. They had come by their own testimony to "worship Him." (Matthew 2:2.) Humble Shepherds, lying in the fields that night, heard the angels' voices. They immediately went to find the child. And this was to be the "sign" or miracle: A Babe, swaddled, and lying in a manger. The Shepherds might have said, "This is no miracle—babies are born every day." Only those who have eyes to see, can detect the miracle of a baby. The hidden possibilities folded within that young life, the power to mold its personality, the opportunity to unleash the powers of its mind—this is a miracle! Christmas calls us back to the Manger Child, back to the spirit of Childhood, back to worship and God! The Wise Men and the Shepherds found the real meaning of that first Christmas, for in this Babe they found the Anointed of God!

Luke tells us that when the Wise Men started back home they were warned not to report to Herod as he had requested, so they went home "another way." (Luke 2:20.) Roy L. Smith suggests that not only did they go home by a different route, but they went home different men. So did the Shepherds. They had stopped to worship that first Christmas, and it had made a difference in their lives. The proof that we have experienced Christmas lies in the difference it makes in us. Are our lives changed by this experience? Will we go home this morning a different way?

I began by saying that this is a strange Christmas. Light is most needed when the darkness is deepest. Certainly with lawlessness and war and hate abroad in the world today, we need to bring the light of the Christian Gospel into that darkness! The world needs desperately to hear again the song of the Angels! The Christian Church is needed more today than ever. We dare not lose faith. We dare not surrender to hate and greed. We must announce to the world in a triumphant voice, backed by our own experience the words of my text: "Unto you is born a Saviour." (Luke 2:11.) And we may be sure that in the end that message will prevail.

At the close of 1863 the United States was at the climax of the Civil War. On Christmas day Longfellow heard the church bells ringing. They seemed to be saying, "Peace on earth, good will to men." But that message directly contradicted existing conditions! Yet, he thought, the message of those bells will eventually prevail. He penned his thoughts in the following poem:

"I heard the bells on Christmas day,
Their old familiar carols play,
And wild and sweet the words repeat
Of peace on earth, good will to men.
I thought how, as the day had come,
The belfries of all Christendom
Had rolled along the unbroken song
Of peace on earth, good will to men.
And in despair I bowed my head;

'There is no peace on earth,' I said,
'For hate is strong, and mocks the song
Of peace on earth, good will to men.'
Then pealed the bells more loud and deep;
'God is not dead, nor doth He sleep;
The wrong shall fail, the right prevail,
With peace on earth, good will to men!'
'Til, ringing, singing on its way
The world revolved from night to day,
A voice, a chime, a chant sublime,
Of peace on earth, good will to men!"

Fourth Sunday In Advent.

THEME: ***The Fulness Of Time.***

WILLIAM R. SIEGART, D. D.

TEXT: "But when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth His Son." Gal. 4:4.

Today is the last Sunday of the Advent Season. Christianity began with the coming of the Christ, and it is fitting that our Church Year should begin with a season of preparation for this holy occasion. John filled the role of a herald for the Master and prepared the way. Thus in the Advent season we seek to prepare our hearts for the coming of the Christ to us. It is with this thought of preparation that I speak this morning, though I am going to a larger fulness of time than that of the individual heart. All things come in the fulness of time. Often, I dare say, we wonder why God did not consummate His promise sooner, but when we give it deep consideration we realize that the Scriptures speak truly when they say that "when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth His Son."

Both externally and internally was the world prepared for the coming of the Christ; i.e., the political and cultural aspects of the state were ready to receive Him and men's hearts longed for Him. This preparation was really marvelous for in no other place and in no other way do we see the guiding hand of Providence so clearly manifest.

Let us look first at the external preparation.

The Romans ruled the world into which the Christ was born. Never before or since had the vast basin of the Mediterranean been held within the control of a single power. This rule extended from Gibraltar to Palestine, and from Egypt to England and the Rhine. The north of Africa, Palestine, Syria, Turkey, the Balkans, Italy, France, Spain, Portugal, part of England and all intervening lands were held under the sway of a single government. Where today there are scores of nations, each with its own language and customs, at the advent of the Christ there was but one, held together by the government of Rome.

There was a system of justice existing throughout this realm. Courts were established and cases had to be tried before the bar. The world of that day was greatly impressed by this.

All trade lanes led to Rome, overland and by sea. It was the center of life and activity of the day.

But, you may ask, what did these things hold for the coming of the Christ? Much every way. Let us examine them further and we will see just what

wonderful preparation God made for the fulfillment of the promise to man. The universal government gave freedom of speech as never before. One language was understood over this vast realm. It gave easy means of travel, such as the world before had not seen. Instead of a journey being beset by perils almost without number one could go from one end of the vast empire to the other in something approaching comfort and safety. While Rome built many good roads over which to move armies with speed, it was in reality constructing highways over which the feet of the messengers of the Prince of Peace might travel. The courts of justice gave to the Apostles and missionaries a measure of freedom from unjust persecution and a chance to establish themselves free of molestation so that the Gospel might be preached. A Roman citizen commanded respect everywhere and that was of enormous benefit, especially to Paul. In the political realm the fulness of time had come.

Besides this political preparation there was an equally important cultural preparation. One of the most important of these was that of racial equality. Even today we do not begin to approach the measure of racial equality which these old Romans maintained in that vast empire. This and the Roman system of justice were closely allied. To the Greeks all who did not speak Greek were barbarians, but the Romans welcomed all races and nations under their banners. Fertile soil was thus at hand for the teaching of the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man.

When Alexander died at thirty three years of age, the victim of drunkenness, debauchery and flattery, he left behind him a large kingdom which was knit together by a unity of language. Little did he think that as he hewed his way through opposing armies he was sowing the seed of a universal tongue in which the Gospel of Peace would be proclaimed to man. Yet that is what did happen, for where the Greek went there went his language also.

Rome later conquered Greece and made the Greeks slaves. But Greek culture would not stay under and we find nobles with Greek slaves who were far superior to their masters in culture and learning. Tutors of the Hellenic race were employed in the Roman schools and in a few years the language of culture, from the gates of Gibraltar to the sands of the Arabian desert, was Greek. Many peoples, but one language, constituted the Roman nation. It is true that the language of the judiciary and rulers was Latin, but the language of culture was Greek. Greek was understood and spoken from one end of the Roman Empire to the other.

This also tells us that a just and merciful God was preparing the world for a great change. When He at last sent His Son into the world the great Roman Empire was all speaking the same language and His Apostles could go the length and breadth of the civilized world almost without interruption, and without an interpreter. Certainly that was an enormous advantage, as any traveller in Europe today will testify. Wherever the missionaries went they could speak Greek and be understood; and that is why our New Testament was written in Greek. Truly, here also the fulness of time was come.

We always learn something from other peoples and each advance of the human race has been marked by a preceding contact with a people of different

culture. The Babylonians and Assyrians each learned something from the other, and contact with the Egyptians gave the Israelites a new lease on life. But the exile and the resultant influence of the Babylonian and surrounding nations probably did more to advance the Jews than anything else. It was after the Crusades brought some of the best blood of Europe in contact with the East that learning was given a new lease on life and the new birth of culture was a direct result of this. So the mingling and co-mingling of diverse peoples throughout the length and breadth of the Roman Empire brought together many cultures, religions, political theories and differing views of life. Each influenced the other, and that made people think, and that also was good for Christianity.

But of great significance in the preparation of the world for Christianity was the spread of the Jews. Where ever they went the synagogue went with them. Always the Apostles had a congregation of Jews and a meeting place, and there they first proclaimed the Gospel of the Christ. Here also we see the guiding hand of God.

Thus was the world prepared both politically and culturally for the reception of the Christ, and in the fulness of time He was sent by the Father for man's redemption.

But the world was also prepared internally for the reception of the Christ. It is well to set the stage but the heart of the actor must be in the play. So God, in His great love and wisdom, saw that man's preparation was of the heart also. Morally and religiously humankind was searching for Him whose soul was love and whose being was like unto God Himself.

One of the signs of a decadent age is near-at-hand-ideals and a-far-away-God. When the treasures of the hand become greater than the treasures of the heart man always puts his God so far away that He seems out of sight and other means of reaching God than direct contact appear necessary. This was the state of affairs when Jesus came upon the scene 1900 years ago. Men were searching here and there. Intermediaries between man and God were almost numberless, but mankind was dissatisfied and wanted a direct approach to God.

In the religious realm all men believed in some kind of God, yet he was usually so far away that an ordinary mortal could not reach Him. A priestly system was necessary and many beings, real and imaginary, came to be worshipped rather than God Himself.

The morality of the age was one of materialism. Wealth became centered in the hands of a few. Licentiousness and debauchery were rampant. They lived for the day and tomorrow was far away. Their morality was thus one for the present time; eternity was almost non-existent.

Philosophy was searching for one God. Redemption was the key note of their desire.

Into this seething world, with everything pointing to the fulness of time, came Jesus, the Son of God. He gave to the world many things, among them these:

1. An ethical life.
2. Revelation from God, the Father.
3. Morality.

4. A Future Life.
5. Forgiveness of sins.
6. A redeeming God.

Christmas Day, December 25.

THEME: *Gold, Frankincense, Myrrh.*

HAROLD E. CARLSON, D. D.

TEXT: "The Wise Men fell down and worshipped Him; and opening their treasures they offered unto Him gifts, gold, frankincense and myrrh." Matt. 2:11.

I

One of the most popular classic Christmas scenes of greetings is that of the Three Wise Men. There are two common scenes. The one is the picture of the stately camels; the other is the Adoration scene. In the latter is suggested the origin of the presentation of gifts in celebration of Christmas.

Our modern custom of giving gifts in the observance of Christmas has been appropriated from this old story about the Wise Men, that has come down the years on the wings of tradition. Besides giving themselves in homage and worship to the Christ-Child each gave Him a gift. As there were three Wise Men we note that their gifts were threefold: one gold, one frankincense, and the third, myrrh. The early Church Fathers have told us that each of these gifts has a significant symbolic meaning, and that each is distinctly representative of each of the Wise Men.

II

The youngest of the three presented the gift of myrrh. We are all familiar with gold, but we are unfamiliar with the gifts of frankincense and myrrh.

Myrrh was a costly, odorous gum used for embalming the dead. The early Church Fathers tells us that the gift of myrrh speaks to us of the new King's mortality. The Wise Men paid their tributes, not so much to the humanity of the Christ-Child as to His divinity. They had faith that they had been led by God to a divine Ruler. It is not to humanity itself that men ascribe honor and glory but to mortality which has achieved divinity. Jesus became the Christ—"The Anointed One"—as St. Paul has so well expressed it, because "existing in the form of God, He counted not the being on an equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, becoming obedient even unto death, yea, the death of the cross" (Phil. 2:5-8). This is the central meaning of Christmas. Jesus is the perfect representation of God, not so much because He was a son of His as because He proved to be God's perfect servant. Because He shared men's mortality and faced their temptations and hunger and thirst, and bore their griefs and fought their battles made Him only a son of God. But because He was the perfect, obedient servant, He became perfectly one with God. He was enabled, therefore, to overcome the world and even death on the cross. "Him did God exalt with His right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance to Israel, and remission of sins" (Acts 5:31).

What shall be the kind of myrrh you and I can present the King? We can give what that consecrated young Wise Man of old gave—a surrendered will to crown this humanity of ours. Jesus' unswerving fidelity to the will of God is the perfect life of God to men whose divinity attracts and constrains, convinces and convicts them of their need of the Saviour. When Jesus came to the end of His ministry He said: "I have glorified Thee on the earth, I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do" (John 17:4). He did not mean that He had come to the end of His allotted "three-score years and ten." We sometimes speculate about the effect of His immediate influence if His life had not been cut short. But it is not more years, but more life to years that glorifies our humanity. When Jesus said that He had finished the work which God had given Him to do, He meant that He had so perfectly filled the years He had lived with perfect submission and obedience to the will of God that He had completed His life on earth. The true life had at last been attained by humanity. Jesus had only one supreme passion and it was to do the will of God. "My meat," He said, "is to do the will of Him that sent Me" (John 4:34). This holy purpose in His life is brought into high relief in the incidents of Gethsemane and the Cross. For there was no keener anguish to His soul than the thought that He might fail to do the will of God. It is true He prayed that the cup of suffering might pass from Him for that was desirable for His mortality. But He also prayed that the over-ruling fact in His life as He faced the Cross, should not be His will of the flesh, but the will of God. "For I came down from heaven," He declared, "not to do Mine own will, but the will of Him that sent Me" (John 6:38). The divinity of Jesus finds its explanation just here. And the verdict of the entire New Testament is that God has no sons who are not servants that have surrendered their wills to Him. Therein lies the divinity of our humanity. The gift of myrrh which you and I may bring the Christ this Christmas is the surrender of our wills to God.

III

The gift of frankincense was a costly aromatic resin used for sacrifice to the gods at the altars of pagan temples.

The early Church Fathers have told us that it speaks of Jesus' divinity. It was the mark of adoration and homage that these Wise Men accorded the Christ-Child for what He meant to them through faith. The very fact that we are present in this sanctuary this hour is token of the adoration and homage we want to pay to Christ. For every soul who has come to worship in spirit and in truth is a Modern Wise Man since he, too, has come from afar, even the Land of self and sin. The sincerity of our worship is revealed by the same test that proved the sincerity of the hearts of the Wise Men of old. According to tradition they were imbued with a whole-souled faith in a God who revealed Himself to men. And the evidence for their simple and childlike faith was revealed in their offering gifts to a Babe when they expected to find a King. Their devotion and loyalty did not fail when the Star led them, not to a palace but to a lowly stable.

Is our devotion and loyalty to Christ the same throughout the year? Or are we present for worship in God's House only on the high festival days

of the year? Is the sincerity of our worship proved by our faithfulness throughout the year when the number of worshippers may not be so many and Christ is not presented constantly as high and lifted up, but rather as everyday Loyalty and unwearying Steadfastness? Is our homage to Christ evidenced by a living faith that God's will is revealed in the regular, customary and uneventful hours of worship? Why not present to the Christ this Christmas the frankincense of our hearts in a pledge of loyalty that the measure of revelation which has been ours to this moment through worship in the past shall be our promise of fuller experience of peace and power. The average service of worship may be prosaic but there is always the possibility of a revelation from God. What could possibly take the place of public worship in keeping alive men's faith in spiritual values! Faithful attendance upon worship is the frankincense we may present the Christ for what He means to us.

IV

The early Church Fathers have told us that gold signifies recognition of the Kingship of Christ. Gold has always been a supreme treasure of men's hearts and the soul who will present the Christ gold gives evidence that he recognizes the King of Kings as Lord of his life.

We are all familiar with the aged Wise Man's gift, but how little some men understand its use. A London newspaper some time ago offered a prize for the best definition of money. Among hundreds that came in response to the offer this one was chosen as the prize winner: "Money is that which can buy you everything but happiness, and pay your fare to every place but heaven." Money can never buy happiness or heaven. Yet to attain happiness and to reach heaven depends more upon the way a man uses money than any other one thing.

Money is not to be loved but for the purpose of loving. I think it is but reasonable that the oldest of the Three Wise Men presented the Christ Child with the gift of gold. The older a man of faith becomes and the more he ponders the place of money in his life, the more he comes to realize that money is not an end but a means—a means to produce fuller, nobler life in men.

Now we are come again into the season of *giving* instituted by the Wise Men of old on the first Christmas. The peril is that we may merely distribute presents at Christmas as a Santa Claus instead of offering gifts in homage and reverence to the Christ as the Wise Men. The three Wise Men of old on that first Christmas, besides giving themselves, gave their gifts of gold and frankincense and myrrh. They presented their gifts to the new born King because—in the apt phrase of Joseph Fort Newton—"they had been star-led and love-lifted."

Again the Christmas Star is shining for us another year in our lives. It is bringing us again to the Christ-Child. And that Christmas Star is the light and love of the Church of Christ constraining us to present our gifts in reverence and adoration of the King of Kings. And the Church has the right to be such a Christmas Star in our lives. It draws us to the Christ. It gives the followers of Christ opportunity to show their faith in Him by offering their gifts of homage.

If the Church is neglected it is simply because men's hearts are not in it. America spends about twenty-two cents of every dollar on luxuries of all kinds, and about three-fourths of a cent on the dollar for religion. How much do you suppose America is spending this Christmas season on Christmas presents? I find that one of our cities last year spent four million dollars. If one city spent this amount the sum being spent this Christmas season for presents in our land must be hundreds of millions of dollars. In all probability many of these hundreds of millions of dollars are spent on presents to give to friends and loved ones out of no other motive than custom, or exchange, or pride, or rivalry. And since twenty-two cents out of every dollar in the year is spent on luxuries, and only three-fourths of a cent of that dollar on religion, how pitifully little of the hundreds of millions of American Christmas dollars is given out of homage and love to Christ as motivated the Wise Men of old!

Men today like to play Santa Claus instead of being modern Wise Men. Shall you and I who profess to have seen His Star in the East forget that the central figure of Christmas is not Santa Claus but Jesus Christ? As the child may fail to reverence him who gave him birth, so we may fail to reverence Christ who gave us re-birth. Last year just before Christmas I learned about a man who sat down in his comfortable chair one evening and said to himself: "Christmas is not catching me in the lurch this year! I think I have remembered everybody I should." He settled back in his chair smug and satisfied. In a few moments he was asleep and dreaming. A voice from the distance spoke to him; "Have you forgotten He?" He asked: "Who are you?" And the voice answered, "I am He who was born in Bethlehem's manger." Then said the man in his dream: "No, Lord! I have not forgotten Thee. I have gone to church every Sunday this year and placed a dime on the collection plate." And the voice said: "So did the folk of Bethlehem. They paid a temple tax; yet I was born in a manger." The man awoke and said to himself: "Say no more, Lord! I *have* forgotten Thee. I shall be thoughtful of Thee who gave Thyself for me." Here was a man who saw the Christmas Star for the first time. It roused him to gratitude and he became a modern Wise Man.

The gifts to the Christ this Christmas Sunday that will make you and me modern Wise Men are exactly what the Wise Men of old gave: A Surrendered Will, A Reverent Heart, and A Consecrated Self.

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

The Coming of God's Son.

LESSON: Isa. 9:6, 7; John 1:1-18; I John 4:9-14. Print Isa. 9:6, 7; John 1:1-4, 10-14; I John 4:9-11.

GOLDEN TEXT: "The Father hath sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world." I John 4:14.

DEVOTIONAL READING: Luke 2:8-20.

INTER. & SR. TOPIC: The Birth of the Saviour.

Y. P. & ADULTS: The Meaning of the Incarnation.

There is a real danger in teaching children of the sweet little babe who lay in the cradle at Bethlehem. It is true that Christ came into the world

in the form of a helpless Babe. This is one of the marvelous features of God's daring plan for the redemption of the world. But as children *grow older* they must come more and more to understand that the birth of Christ was not the beginning of His life, nor was His conception by the power of the Holy Ghost in the womb of the Virgin Mary the beginning of His life. He was eternal. "Before Abraham was I am." His conception and His birth were merely episodes in His life and they were humiliating episodes at that. In coming into the world, He emptied Himself of the glory, of much of the power, of the omniscience, the omnipotence, and many other attributes which He had with the Father before the world was. Notice that in our text the creation of the world is ascribed to Him. Incidentally, this is one of the interesting proofs of the doctrine of the Trinity. To God, to Christ and to the Holy Spirit are ascribed, each in turn, the entire attributes of the Godhead. Christ's coming into the world involved humiliating limitations on His part. See Phil. 2:6-9.

The appearance of Christ was the culmination of God's plan from Eternity for the salvation of men.

The teacher would do well to study and emphasize the preparation for His coming. It was one of those rare intervals of world peace. A universal language prevailed. Communication to all the known world was made easy by the network of highways built by the Roman Empire. The hearts of men were weary with the outmoded religions of the times. Much may be made by the thoughtful teacher in emphasizing these Providential aspects of the coming of God's Son. He was born from Jewish stock. The Jews were the spiritual torch-bearers of the race. The fulfillment of the Jewish nation came in the birth of Christ. For His appearance they were created through Abraham. He is the highest flower and fruit of the Jewish race.

EVENING SERMON

THEME: ***Two Bethlehem Conversations.***

CHARLES HADDON NABERS, D. D.

TEXT: Luke 2:15.

Soldiers three lean against the dull gray walls of Bethlehem. It is the year 753 after the founding of Rome, for so the peoples reckon time. Rome, that proud city seated in majesty astride her seven hills above the tawny Tiber, is mistress of the world under Emperor Augustus. Legionnaires bearing aloft her eagles patrol the moonlit ruins of Carthage in northern Africa, gaze patronizingly upon Pharonic ruins in Egypt, look lazily out towards the western sea through the Pillars of Hercules, call roughly to each other on picket duty across the Rhine, and guard the Palestinian trails along which Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob led flocks of sheep and herds of camels.

Strange events have lately transpired in the tiny hill town four and a half miles south of Jerusalem. In these events, as in important events elsewhere, the soldiers played their part; but these soldiers, as other soldiers elsewhere, possessed little inkling of the events in which they played their assigned role.

Soldiers three—Titus and Cassius and Paul—watch the swaying camels heavy with produce from the south move northward towards the city. To each other they speak:

"It's a bloody business," says Titus to the other two, "and I'm glad this bloody business is over. I'm a Roman soldier; and as such it matters little to me to wound by night and to kill by day, but sticking swords in babies pulled from the arms of weeping mothers is too much! Your king, Paul, is a strange man. I obey orders, but by Jupiter, I want no more orders."

Says Cassius: "Nor I! I hear the sobs of the women yet. What is gained from the murder of baby boys is more than I can see. King Herod must be mad. And this little town is a strange place for the practice of such madness. Tell me, Paul, you Jew wearing the uniform of the empire, what sort of a place is the Bethlehem against whose walls we lean?"

Paul answers, and as he answers his face glows with a radiance that sends his spirit sailing across the years into ages long ago rolled upon the scroll of history, and brings before him a procession of heroes whose exploits he heard in boyhood days around the camp fires of Israel:

"Bethlehem is my home town. It is the city of David, our greatest ruler, who reigned here in splendor three hundred years before your city of Rome was founded. My people grew from the seed of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and down yonder that dome of stone marks the tomb of Rachel, loved wife of Jacob who died nigh unto Bethlehem. On these hills the ruddy lad David, youngest son of Jesse, led sheep and lambs as you see that shepherd boy doing now. Here he began to sing the songs that have been precious to our people in all these years.

Asks Cassius: "What songs?"

Paul replies: "Songs like this:

"The Lord's my shepherd, I'll not want.
He makes me down to lie
In pastures green; He leadeth me
The quiet waters by.

"My soul He doth restore again,
And me to walk doth make
Within the paths of righteousness,
E'n for His own name's sake.

"Yea, tho' I walk through death's dark vale,
Yet will I fear no ill,
For Thou art with me, and Thy rod
And staff me comfort still.

"Goodness and mercy all my life
Shall surely follow me,
And in God's house for evermore
My dwelling place shall be."

"Bethlehem has a well, over there where the men are drawing water for those sheep, that to David was more satisfying than any drink to be had elsewhere. When in exile he craved a horn of its waters, and mighty men from his army broke through the enemy lines to grant his request. But when they gave him the water, and he realized at what peril it had been

procured, he poured it upon the ground, unwilling to satisfy a selfish craving at the risk of human life.

"Bethlehem, our sages have pointed out, will be the birthplace of a king greater even than David, whose reign shall be longer than the reign of Rome, and whose empire shall embrace the whole world. And maybe he is come. Jehovah forbid that the edict of Herod should slay the lad whose coming Micah and Isaiah saw so clearly. Bethlehem, fellow soldiers of Rome, is a small town, but we love it. When the king comes, the work that we do will no longer be needed. He will end war and make the Roman lion and the Jewish lamb lie down together in the same field. Our prophets have called Him, 'The Prince of Peace.' "

"The Prince of Peace!" broke in Titus and Cassius, "The Prince of Peace! Wouldn't we like to see him! Wouldn't it be good to give him a round after fighting for the God of War these many winters and summers!"

Titus continues, as the three soldiers walk from the wall back to the place of duty: "There's a feel in this air that is new to me. There's a look upon the faces of that shepherd band I never saw before. They act like they have a secret so important that nothing else matters not even life or death. When that Eastern caravan departed three days ago those rulers seemed to carry from this little town, locked within their minds treasure more valuable than that hidden in the walls of Caesar's palace in beloved Rome. There's something that I cannot figure out. It's beyond me. It's beyond us all.

"Paul, you Jew, maybe you know more than we do. Maybe the biggest king after all will rule without force. Maybe he can gain peoples and cities without slaughter. Maybe the day will come when we can take these swords, hammer them into ploughshares for the tilling of fertile fields instead of sticking them into the guts of men who have done us no harm. Maybe we can take these sharp spears and twist them into shears to prune the vines to grow the purple grapes beside the Italian sea. The Prince of Peace! I'm for him, even if he be a Bethlehem Jew. The business I'm in is a bloody business, and I've had more than a fill of it. And so has the whole empire and the world."

The conversation ends. Life continues in Bethlehem. The babes slain at the command of Herod are gathered into shallow graves. Mothers dry their tears and return to their homes, and new tragedies spread bigger blots over old tragedies.

Tramp, tramp, tramp the years are marching. The Christ that was born in Bethlehem of Judea grows to manhood on the hills of Galilee, issues forth from the village of Nazareth to do mighty works and to speak as never man spoke before. He teaches in city and by lake, gathers a loyal group of disciples about Him, incurs the implacable enmity of Jew and Roman, has opposition gathering about Him like a mighty Alpine avalanche until He is arrested by trickery, tried by chicanery, condemned by demagoguery, nailed to a cross while heavens were darkened and multitudes jeered, and buried by stealth in a borrowed tomb. But the grave would not hold Him, and life began fifty days thereafter as His Spirit entered human hearts that began to witness to the reality of His power and the divinity of His personality.

Tramp, tramp, tramp the years continued their march. Jerusalem was

battered to *smithereens* by the Roman armies with all the modern implements of war in the next generation, and a temple to Jupiter arose on Mount Moriah which David had bought for a temple to Jehovah. But that temple ended, and Christ came back with a great church dedicated to His glory. The Roman standards lost the eagles and carried the cross, but even so there was as yet no peace. On the site of the khan in Bethlehem stood a church, but without and within its walls soldiers fought under the frescoes that heralded Christ as Prince of Peace. The Moslem scimitar swooped down upon the Holy Land, sliced the cross from off the churches, and left instead a crescent colored red that smelled of the blood freely spilled on battle fields where now soldiers fought as of yore. Crusaders with loud prayers and long swords sailed from out the west and held dominion long enough to steady the ancient church of Bethlehem with oaken beams brought from the forests of far away, then while Saladin and Richard the Lion-Hearted shed more blood on the Horns of Hattim the cross was again eclipsed by the crescent, and long lines of worshippers again bowed away from the hills on which a cross stood towards a covered meteorite in a forbidden Arabian city.

Tramp, tramp, tramp the years continued to march, and at every turn of the road more battles, more hatreds, more streams of blood, and more piles of wreckage of men and things. A world war rescues Bethlehem from Moslem dominion, and Te Deums are sung throughout Christendom for the restoration of peace to the land of the Prince of Peace.

But not for long. In the train of the settling of hillsides and valleys and plains on which blossomed orange trees and where Jewish boys and Jewish girls sang of love and hope and peace on the plains of Esdraelon in the tongue of Hosea, came soldiers to fight new battles on fields that had soaked up the blood of Assyrian archers and Babylonian bowmen, of Macedonian phalanxes and Roman legions, of Crusading knights and Turkish regiments, of Allenby's battalions and League of Nations mandate troops, and soldiers three yet lounge against gray walls in Bethlehem, this time leaning against sand bags that form a fortified fence across the main square of the little town.

It is the year 1939 of the Christian era. The Christ has written His name above every other name in the chronology of the nations, but not yet above every desire and aspiration in the soul of man, not even of those who delight to call themselves by His titles. Bethlehem's fighters are clad in the khaki designed to disguise troops and their movements from the enemy. Lying about the little square across which Wise Men once moved in search of Him who should be born King of the Jews are all the modern mechanized weapons for the slaughter of man—machine guns, tanks, armored cars, and when one lifts his eyes above the mass of military equipment to see the scouting plane heavily humming in its flight across the sky, one sees in silhouette the tower whose chimes at Christmas bring by radio the music of peace from the church built over the cradle of Christ.

Soldiers three lean against the dark gray sandbags, and puff American cigarettes as they talk—Clay and O'Malley and David.

"Christmas is here again," says Clay. "It's a bloody business spending

Christmas in Bethlehem killing snipers. When I was a lad, my Sunday School teacher in Glasgow taught me the Psalms of David, and I've always thought of these parts in the words of those poems:

"Pray that Jerusalem may have
Peace and felicity;
All those that love thee and thy peace
Shall have prosperity.

"I therefore wish that peace may still
Within thy walls remain,
And ever may thy palaces
Prosperity retain.

"And now, for friends' and brethren's sakes
'Peace be in thee,' I'll say;
Yea, for the house of God our Lord,
I'll seek thy good alway."

"And there's these concrete barriers over roads with less peace and security in Palestine since the days of the Judges, with this city hall burned, with forty concentration camps filled with Arab bandits, with roads closed, and Jew and Arab hating and fighting; where is the peace for which the world gave thanks to God? It's a bloody business, being in Bethlehem to shoot across the fields where angels once sang peace to shepherds. David, what does this land mean to you?"

David answers, "My people came from around Bethlehem to England. We found peace far from home, and we are here today to give our folks who did not leave the peace that we found elsewhere. And we have to fight, and I do not like to fight. It's a bloody business, and I like it not a bit!"

O'Malley takes up the thought, "Yes, it's a bloody business, and I don't think the Prince of Peace thinks much of soldiering. We say we are fighting for peace, but those who taught me the Bible made me see that peace does not come that way. War increases hatreds. Every new battle prepares the way for another with more bitterness and more enmity. The way of the Christ is not by bullets or by gas, but by love and by forgiveness. Yesterday an Arab I was pulling into the camp sneered at me saying, 'Take your British soldiers away, and we'll drink the blood of every Jew in the country before sunset.' And last year when I saw an American tourist pay off his dragoman in front of this church, he asked him, 'What are you going to do with this money I am giving you?' and he replied, 'Buy more guns and more bullets to kill more enemies.' It is not the way of the Christ child cradled here in this little country town."

Clay says, "You are right. We have to stay here for quite a while. Do you mind, David, if we read over aloud just what took place here when Jesus came?"

David replies, "Not at all. I would like it. I'll run over to this shop and borrow three New Testaments so that we can all read it together."

He comes back with little Testaments printed in England, and bound in polished olive wood backs.

Clay says, "O'Malley, you read what Luke says about it."

In deep Irish accents O'Malley reads the familiar story of the birth of

Jesus and the visit of the shepherds as Luke tells it. "Wonderful," he concluded, "and it happened here. The Son of God came to earth here. And we fight. It's a bloody business, and it is not His business."

David says, "Now let me read what Matthew says," and he reads the story of the Wise Men.

David said, "What can we do to make the vision that once came to Bethlehem come true? Here we stand, a Jew whose forefathers fought on these fields, and two Christians whose ancestors in Crusading times likewise fought here. We are still fighting. Do you think that it might help if we prayed, the three of us, and do you think that the God who once sent angels down to speak to men on yonder field one night would hear the prayers of modern men at grips with life, and hungering and thirsting for the peace on earth and the good will to men about which the angel chorus sang?"

Together on the rough cobblestones they knelt, oblivious of passersby and the babel of sounds from the nearby market.

Prayed David: "O Thou God of Abraham, of Isaac and Jacob, the God of my fathers, whom Thou didst bless that they might carry Thy benedictions to all nations, come in power and rid the world of hatred and ignorance. Teach us Jews to be tolerant of all men, and remove from our hearts enmity for the Arabs and for all others. Show us how to bless them which persecute us, and to pray for those who despitefully use us. So transform our souls that we may leave vengeance unto Thee, and overcome evil with good. Grant it for the glory of Thy eternal name. Amen."

Prayed O'Malley: "O Christ of God, whose infant form nestled in the loving arms of Mary somewhere close to where we kneel, bring to pass in the life of the world all the changes needed to cause the world to find peace, and to send back to heaven the music of harmony between races, and classes, and nations and men. Thou Who art the Way, lead me into it. Thou Who art the Truth, reveal that truth in me. Thou Who art the Life, deliver me from the death of sin and selfishness. Amen."

Prayed Clay: "O Lord of earth and Ruler of heaven, in an upper room beyond yonder hill Thou didst pray one night for us, that we may all be one, so that the world might know the Child born in Bethlehem was truly the Christ of God. Make us Thy lieutenants to bring this petition to pass. Hallowed be Thy name in Bethlehem and in my heart. Thy kingdom come in Galilee, in Germany, in England, in the New World, and in me. Thy will be done in earth—in all the earth by all the sons of men for Thou didst come to save them all—as by the celestial chorus. Forgive us our debts—our pride, our greed, our gloating, our self-satisfaction, our colossal littleness, our sinful speech, our filthy thinking, our great transgressions and our secret faults, as we hope for forgiveness by our gracious pardon of those who do us wrong.

"Give us day by day the material necessities of life, and lead us to use them as Thy stewards for the sort of helpful ministry in which Thou art always engaged. Deliver us from evil and lead us in the way everlasting for Thy name's sake. Make the song of the angels come true in our time, and begin by the re-creation of my soul so that I can shout, 'Glory to God in the

highest, and on earth peace, good will to men.' For the sake of the Holy Child of Bethlehem, my Lord, I pray. Amen."

Might we not follow these prayers, seeking the peace of God which passes all understanding? From a hill less than five miles from Bethlehem a little group of Spirit-filled men went forth and taught the world the power of faith; why not set forth today to teach the world that Christ's way of love is the only pathway to peace? I go; who goes with me?

MID-WEEK SERMON

THEME: How to Find God.

TEXT: James 4:7-10.

Human need for God. If one could chart plainly the road—! "The Return to Religion": Link—four thousand cases in fifteen years.

Act Definitely Toward God: Crises in human life. Family problems. Death. Business troubles. Personality development. The difficulty in the way of recovery: "Not the presence of inhibitions, but the absence of certain habits and skills." Put yourself in the way of God. The definite rejection of wrong and bad habits. "Resist the devil, and he will fly from you." God does not leave us. Definite adoption of right and good habits. "Submit yourselves to God. . . . Cleanse your hands. . . . Purify your hearts." The habit of Church attendance. Sunday School and Church Work. "Humble yourselves before the Lord and he will raise you up."

The Example of Jesus: "I have given you an example": Humble service to others when he was facing the greatest crisis of his own life. Under the shadow of the Cross, he washed disciples' feet. When way was darkened, he prayed. Our difficulties with prayer. Intellectual? Practical: we do not pray! When plans were broken and desires thwarted, he served, he gave himself to others. When there was no other way, he sacrificed himself. Great effect of sacrifice is not in meeting the need of others, but the realization of self and the gaining of our own happiness. Have we a quarrel with that?

The Word of the Sacrament: "In remembrance of me!" The pictures before our eyes: the Cross; the ministry of Service; the clear words of Life. Jesus in the first chapters of Acts: God was with him, because he was with God. Make a friend of Jesus, then the Sacrament will become real to you. His God will become real to you. Life will become richer and fuller, because your character will have become richer and fuller. You will have blessed "memories" of him.

TOPICS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE'S SOCIETIES

CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR: Y. P.—"There is room in my heart for Thee." Luke 2:1-19. Eph. 3:17.

Jr.—Christmas in Picture and Poem. Luke 2:1-18.

WALTHER LEAGUE: December Topic. Your Community. Problems of Modern Community Life: Occupations, Population, Health, Transportation, Recreation, Protection, Civic Beauty. Civic Responsibility.

DECEMBER, FOURTH SUNDAY

CALL TO WORSHIP: "I press on, if so be that I may lay hold on that for which also I was laid hold on by Christ Jesus . . . but one thing I do, forgetting the things which are behind, and stretching forward to the things which are before. I press on toward the goal unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

PSALM: 89.

PRELUDE: Dawn—*Chubb.*

ANTHEM: Break Forth Into Joy—*Simper.*

OFFERTORY: Berceuse—*Colburn.*

POSTLUDE: Fugue in A Minor—*Bach.*

OFFERTORY SENTENCE: "Behold, God will not cast away a perfect man; neither will He uphold the evil-doers."

BENEDICTION: "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit."

SERMONS

THEME: ***The Path of Pain.***

TEUNIS E. GOUWENS, D. D.

TEXT: "It is good for me that I have been afflicted." Psalm 119:71.

The man who can speak like that has not been through adversity in vain. The path of pain brought him to an enrichment of life which enabled his soul to approve even the affliction through which it passed.

The problem of suffering has always challenged the thought and faith of man. Philosophers and theologians of the ages have tried to solve its mystery. But its deep meaning has never been fathomed.

We do not pretend, of course, to have found an adequate explanation. It is likely that we shall be unable to make a single new contribution to the thought of the ages on this theme. We certainly are not seeking a novel interpretation, nor do we dare to hope for a complete understanding. But it is not necessary to answer all questions. It is necessary only to assure ourselves that the formidable path of pain can be justified by the richer life to which it leads. Let me present four things that may be said about the way of tribulation.

In the first place, let us remind ourselves that pain is universal. If we suffer it is not because we have been singled out for harsh treatment. Our affliction identifies us with our kind. Pain is here. It is a part of our lives because it is a part of the world. It is found wherever life is found.

The story of evolution is a story of strife, sacrifice, wounds and death. It is also a story of life. But everywhere the life is purchased at the cost of risk, struggle and blood.

And what is true of evolution is true of history. The annals of advancing civilization are annals of suffering. Wars were fought with their attendant poverty, disease and sorrow. New lands were discovered and explored in the face of untold hardship. Ideals were pursued at the price of comfort and of life itself. Every art of which civilization can boast has behind it a dark background. Every high achievement is the outcome of an earnestness which did not flinch from peril. Every element in our priceless heritage from the past was purchased at the cost of something more precious than gold.

There is one path which every person walks, each in his own way. It is

the path of pain. Everything that has a voice knows how to cry. And man is not an exception. Even if the cry is hushed, the pain is still there. Indeed, its silence only makes it worse. The wretchedness of the psalmist when he hid his sin is like the distress of the man who broods on his misfortune.

A woman lost her father. Inwardly she was in torment, but outwardly she was calm. She was wasting away in her silent grief, and without bitterness but with the pathos of helplessness, she exclaimed to me: "If I could only cry!" A little later something touched the spring of her tears and with their flow her bruised heart was healed. Some know how to cry, but others keep their pain pent up in the secret confines of their heart.

But whether our distress is visible or not, it is there. When we speak of tribulation we speak a universal language. Brooks, in his "Life of Emerson," quotes Juvenal as saying, "A single house will show whatever is done or suffered in the world."

Look where you will, in your own life or in the lives of your friends, and you will see sickness, accident and sorrow. You meet a person with a cheerful countenance and you covet the inner joy of which it speaks. But cultivate the acquaintance of that person and, if you are permitted to see the sanctuary of his soul, you will see a place where costly sacrifices have been made. Make no mistake about it, my friend, we are all travelers on the path of pain. Our hearts may ache, our hearts may break, but at least we are not alone.

The Bible attests its fidelity to human experience by the large place it gives to suffering. On nearly every page some reference to it is found. Here is a man who suffers the consequences of his wrongdoing. Here is another who is tortured by the jealousy of his brothers. Here is one who is persecuted because he dares to proclaim the truth as he sees it. Here is one who is sick, and here is another who is in sorrow. Indeed not one escapes. Begin to contemplate this theme and a hundred passages of sacred writ will clamor for permission to illustrate its various phases.

We all belong to one vast company. And it is the lot of our company to suffer. This is the first fact we recognize about the path of pain.

The second is that the higher we ascend in the scale of life, the keener our pain becomes. Animals suffer, but they do not suffer in the same degree as man. Their present distress is augmented neither by the memory of a regrettable past, nor by the fear of a forbidding future. Mental anguish is harder to bear than any physical hurt.

In every sphere of activity, our sensitiveness and its corresponding distress increase with the quality of life. The ear that has been trained to listen to good music is offended by a false chord which the uncultivated ear does not even notice. The eye that is trained to see beauty is irritated by an ugly scene to which other eyes are blind. Everywhere it is true: as life develops it is more easily wounded.

And where does life reach its highest? What is the best thing we know? The Bible and our own experience agree that only one word can define the choicest treasure in life. That one word is "Love." If we are right in our contention, therefore, love should be, of all things, the most susceptible to

suffering. And so it is. Consult the best literature of the ages and see what it has to say on this matter. If men wish to describe pain at its worst, they must begin with a story of love. If they begin with a story of love, they cannot avoid the issue of tribulation. Love is the most precious thing in the world. But it is also, and perhaps for that very reason, the most fragile and the most easily wounded.

At every turn love is susceptible to injury, but the thing that hurts it most is the pain of a dear one. Love is worthiest when it is utterly unselfish, and it suffers most when it finds expression in sympathy. We can stand our own personal pain, but what can keep our hearts from breaking when we witness the ordeal of a loved one?

Dr. P. Carnegie Simpson in his book, "The Facts of Life," quotes at length from a modern novel. It is the description of a father who watches the intense suffering of his sick child. The picture of the child's distress is the most graphic representation of physical pain I have seen. But the striking thing about this passage is not the vividness with which the torture of the child is portrayed, but rather the force with which one is made to feel the desperate agony of the father. "He raised his clenched fist threateningly to heaven, he seized the child with an insane idea of flight, and then, flinging himself upon his knees, he prayed to the God in heaven." "But," we are told, "the sufferings continued." The suffering of the child was acute, but the pain in the father's heart of love "beggared all description."

Let a man face a situation like that and I say to you that only impudence will undertake to explain it. We endure it, all of us endure it in one way or another, but why it should be necessary we cannot say. Why the price of love is so high we have never been told. We know from life itself that nothing suffers as love suffers. We know we cannot have the love without its susceptibility to pain. We know we would not give up the love at any cost. Let us not insist on knowing why affection keeps such intimate company with tribulation. Let us rather confess that its treasures are not too dearly bought.

The third thing I wish to say about pain is that it refines character. Job was not stating a theory when he said, "When he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold." He was describing a process that was actually going on in his soul. And multitudes in all ages have been able to testify to the same experience. Not all who suffer become stronger and purer and more beautiful. Some only grow bitter. But I question if life presents a single way to strength and purity and beauty which does not pass through a wilderness of trial and tribulation.

If there were a smooth and easy way to attainment in virtue, the Master no doubt would have indicated it by precept and example. But he has nothing to say about painless virtue and he himself, as the Captain of our salvation, was made perfect through sufferings.

A colored man, confined to bed for a score of years, so badly crippled as to be utterly helpless except for the use of his left hand, sings out of his affliction this song of gratitude:

"For pain that serves to purge the soul,
We give Thee thanks;

For cares that raise us toward the goal,
  We give Thee thanks;
For bits of rest that intervene,
For tears and sighs, with smiles between,
For all, O gracious Nazarene,
  We give Thee thanks."

When a man can sing like that and mean it he has reached a real achievement in character.

There are times when our hearts are filled with a spirit of murmuring. At such times we do well to recall the outstanding souls in the world's history. Did they escape pain? Not one of them escaped. To every one something happened to interpret the words of Hezekiah, "I shall go softly all my years in the bitterness of my soul. O Lord, by these things men live."

Consider what the saints of the ages have suffered. Begin with your own parents and read the endless roll. Follow the red line of blood and pain till it leads to the cross itself. In the light of the suffering of the ages and the virtue to which it led, can we say that we have been too severely and unnecessarily initiated into the fellowship of pain? I think not; I think we can even rise to the height of the Psalmist and say, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted." Believe me, my friend, the enviable people are not the people who are living in luxury and ease. The enviable people are the people who are being refined and turned into something of which our most descriptive symbol is gold.

John Bunyan has a simple little poem which represents a child addressing a bird on the bush.

"My little bird, how canst thou sit
  And sing amidst so many thorns?
Let me but hold upon thee get,
  My love with honour thee adorns.

" 'Tis true it is sunshine to-day,
  To-morrow birds will have a storm;
My pretty one, come thou away,
  My bosom then shall keep thee warm."

The sentiment of the child here is commendable enough. But if the little bird had been taken from its native environment of risk and storm and peril, it would have lost its song. It would have lost the spirit which gave it character as a bird.

The most marked progress in the life of the soul is made when obstacles are encountered, when wounds are received, when the path lies in the dark. There are sufferings which, as Dr. John A. Hutton suggests, we can escape if we are willing to lower the flag of our soul. But he who avoids pain at the price of such a surrender prepares for himself a worse wretchedness. Let a man keep the flag of his soul flying. It will challenge further resistance and result in further distress. But these are the things on which manhood thrives.

And now there is one more thing to be said about pain. It is the fact that it leads to God. This may sound strange. It is indeed a mystery which no amount of argument can make plain. It is a truth which can be verified

only in experience. Not all who suffer find God, but hosts in their extremity have fled to the Eternal Refuge and have been confident and happy in their discovery. Suppose that the loved one whom you saw suffer was led in his pain to lean more heavily on the Everlasting Arms and in leaning found the peace that passes understanding. I know that has happened and those to whom it happens praise God.

A man who was not a Christian lost his wife. A little later he lost his child. At the service for the child, the minister read the psalm beginning, "Out of the depths have I cried unto thee, O Lord." At those words, the man broke down in an uncontrollable grief. Why did he moan without power of restraint? It was because that psalm struck a responsive chord in his naked soul. He was in the depths, and the prayer of the psalmist burst through a heart unaccustomed to prayer. God said, "I have seen thy tears." He came to him, and the man knew him.

Paul says, "I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." No doubt Paul is right. Indeed this is the faith by which we live. If we have not this faith, the luster and the meaning of life depart. But why do we reckon that our present sufferings are not worth mentioning in view of our future glory? It is because we believe that behind all our pain is a God who not only cares about us but actually enters into our affliction.

Have we any reason for believing that we have such a God? The answer is the cross of Christ. That cross assures us that at the heart of this universe is a love whose redemptive purpose the utmost suffering cannot frustrate. If pain and love go together in the life of man, they go together also in the cross which reveals the heart of God.

This does not remove the mystery of pain but it does bring us with our problem into the very presence of a God who loves us. We cannot stand at the foot of the cross and murmur against God. Nor have we the slightest desire to murmur. Rather, a strange but most blessed peace comes into our souls. Deep calleth unto deep, and the response is unmistakable. God is there.

Sunday After Christmas.

THEME: *A Balanced Life.*

FRANCIS C. VIELE, D. D.

TEXT: "As his custom was. . . ." Luke 4:16.

There were many things in the life of Jesus that were unlike anything that had ever been seen among the sons of men. It was these characteristics of his life that appealed so strongly to the people of his day and have continued to make him the favored example of virtue and influence during the centuries.

A Balanced Life.

The text suggests more than the surface conditions of Christ's life. He never did anything just for the sake of having something to do. It was the religious contacts that developed the inspiration and strength for the larger work of his ministries. If Christ could experience spiritual refreshment by

observing the religious rites of his day, is there the semblance of a reason why the practice should not be profitably honored now? Men who are never seen in a place of worship will often speak impressively of that which Jesus did to safeguard the spiritual interests and needs of the world. His obligations in worship were as impressive as were his duties in ministering to the crowds.

Christ led a balanced life. There was no one thing in his life that was more important than anything else he was ever known to do. With him, time was too precious to spend a moment in doing something that was not essential. Had this example not characterized his life among men, he could not in the end have addressed the Father in his prayer saying: "I have glorified thee in the earth: I have finished the work thou gavest me to do."

The Background of Service.

Worship is the background of service and the loadstone of right living. People who can get nothing out of worship are unfitted for the most important tasks of life. While there is no solitary cause for the lessened interest in church attendance, there is probably nothing more responsible for the religious situation that confronts this generation than the impression that is abroad that religion represents nothing more sacred and needful than the educational interests of life. There was a time when educational movements were associated with the life of the church. It is Christianity that has inspired the elaborate educational systems of the world. The church originated the impression that everyone is entitled to receive the benefits of a trained mind.

But there has been a gradual trend away from the church through the growing belief that nothing, after all, is comparable to intellectual enlightenment. But this idea is weakening to the moral stability of the race. There is nothing that can be used as a substitute for worship. The man who regularly recognizes the sovereignty of God in the act of worship is not only gleaning indispensable benefits for himself, but his example is an inspiration to others. It then may be said that one of the special needs of the day is exemplary interest in worship.

To humble ourselves in the presence of God is an acknowledgement of our dependence upon him for every desirable and needful thing in life. It reminds the world that the Lord is the source of the great variety of abilities and gifts which honor the lives of men, by which they are enabled to overcome handicaps and to get the most out of life's moral investments. There is no part of life that does not feel the benign effects of worship. We should, therefore, be prepared at all times to bear witness to the fact that all seasons of sincere worship are "times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord."

A Neglected Contact.

No one needs to be well along in years to be able to note the changes that have occurred in the attitude of men toward church services. Twenty five years ago there was more general interest shown in this phase of religious affairs than is true of the present time. Some claim that the changes about which we are hearing so much are nothing more than differing forms of expression. If this is the explanatory form of reliable observation, how are

we to account for the diminishing amount of support being placed at the disposal of church officials?

Some of the most fantastic and insipid excuses are named by people who try to justify themselves in their aloofness from the church. One of the most ordinary excuses is that they were compelled to attend religious services so regularly during childhood that they naturally lost interest in all such things when they were privileged to follow their own desires. But it has never been made plain why such decisions are exclusively against religious duties.

Have you ever heard anyone say that he lost interest in his ability to read and write because he had to attend school in childhood? Do you know of any people who have withdrawn their support from the various forms of entertainment, including the theater, the movies, baseball, basket ball, football, etc., because these things were a part of their experiences in the early years of life? Entertainment of all descriptions is increasingly influencing the life of this generation. Entertainment as a pastime deserves an important place in the lives of men. But when it becomes the all-absorbing interest in life it is a menace to the progress of essential activities.

In services of worship and praise, the elements of inspiration and strength are present. There is nothing that can take the place of devotional observances. If those who have lost interest in church affairs were able to show greater moral improvement than other people in their contacts with life, the argument for established periods of worship as a means of grace would lose its appeal. But such examples of moral advancement have never been seen independent of some religious incentive.

And yet there are people who contend that they are better out of the church than in it. If being members of the church was the only important phase of religion, there might be instances when the force of this contention would have an important place in human thought. But religion and its office-work in life embraces more than the formal consent to unite with the church. The acceptance of Christ, the confession of sins, the consciousness of the divine approval and a changed life, are the only *bona fide* evidences of consistent church membership. When these characteristics are noted in the lives of men, it is safely inferred that it is their customary practice to honor sanctuary privileges and worship the Lord "in the beauty of holiness."

The Supreme Example.

When Jesus attended the synagogue services in Nazareth there were conditions which hindered people from forming right conceptions of the meaning of the religions they had inherited from their fathers. To be "letter perfect" in their religious affairs was the crowning ambition of their lives. After Jesus had read a portion of Isaiah's prophecy and said: "This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears," the people wondered what it was all about. They did not grasp the significance of his announcement, and yet in some vague way they realized that he was speaking of something of momentous and far-reaching importance that would have something to do in shaping their religious destiny.

But they refused to concede his authority to claim the fulfillment of prophecy in his person and ministry. Yet their refusal to tolerate his pres-

ence on this occasion did not change his course nor lessen his interest in the spiritual welfare of his people. But he continued to give them the opportunity to find in him the supreme example of consistency in labor and in worship.

We who are interested in maintaining places of worship need to be alert in grasping every opportunity to ask people to accompany us to "the house of the Lord." We should not fail in making plain to them that they need the church a thousand times more than the church needs them. We should form the habit of speaking of the church with as much zest as we ever manifest in our conversations about business and social affairs. When this practice becomes an ingrained part of our lives in our contacts with men we will, in a larger way, honor the Christ, of whom it is said: "And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up; and as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day and stood up to read."

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

The Christian's Hope.

LESSON: Matt. 25:31-46; John 14:1-6; II Cor. 5:1-10; II Tim. 4:6-8; I Peter 1:3-9; Rev. 22:1-5. Print John 14:1-6; Rev. 22:1-5.

GOLDEN TEXT: "In my Father's house are many mansions." John 14:2.

DEVOTIONAL READING: Revelation 21:1-7.

INTER. & SR. TOPIC: Citizens of Two Worlds.

Y. P. & ADULTS: The Christian's Hope.

John 14:1-6 in our lesson today contain words which have brought to sorrowing hearts around the world more comfort, more inspiration, more blessing than tongue can tell. Jesus broke up every funeral He ever attended. He did not argue for the existence of the life beyond. He quietly took it for granted. "If it were not so," He said, as though in surprise, "I would have told you. In my Father's house are many mansions." 1. These are mansions of release from the suffering, the pain, the heartache, the limitations of this life. 2. These are mansions of life—Life more thrilling, more full, more glorious, more abounding than any we have ever known here. 3. These are mansions of recognition. Here we shall meet and know our loved ones. We shall see no longer through a glass darkly but face to face. 4. These are mansions of reunion where we shall be with Him and with those we have loved and lost.

HEAVEN

"Life changes all our thought of Heaven;
At first we think of streets of gold
And angel wings and robes of light
And things all strange to mortal sight.
But in the afterward of years
It is a more familiar place,
A home, untouched by sighs or tears,
Where waiteth many a well loved face.
With passing months it comes more near,

It grows more real day by day,
Not strange and far but very near,
The glad homeland not far away,
Where none are sick or poor or lone,
The place where we shall find our own,
And as we think of those we've lost
Who there have met to part no more
Our longing hearts desire home, too,
With all the strife and sorrow o'er."
—*Robert Browning.*

5. These are mansions of service. 6. These are mansions of knowledge. We shall know, not in part as here, but we shall know "as we are known."

Revelation 22:1-5 makes it clear that Heaven is a place. It is not an idea nor simply a state of being. It is a place where He is, where our loved ones are.

The assurance of all of this to the Christian is Christ's own resurrection from the dead. He came out of the tomb, not in any vague, poetic sense, ravishingly beautiful but etherially unreal. No—He rose actually, coming out of the tomb with the resurrection body, leaving the tomb empty, emptying it of all of its terror and gloom, making its doors to swing wide open on the golden hinges of His mighty power. Thus, you and I can see our loved ones go out through the Valley of the Shadow with confidence and quiet faith because He has gone that way before. His victory over death is ours. We, too, shall rise and be with Him forevermore. This is the Christian's hope and faith.

EVENING SERMON

THEME: ***An Irresistible Majority. (New Year.)***

WILLIAM S. BOWDEN, D. D.

TEXT: "Fear not; for they that be with us are more than they that be with them." II Kings 6:16.

Nothing flies so swiftly, so surely, so constantly as time. No strength of human will can stay its steady, onward march. Hoarded wealth is powerless to buy back the years already gone. At the close of the year the mind instinctively turns to this flight of time. With lightning speed the old year has rushed its round, and buried itself in the eternal past. The clock has ticked away its moments, one by one, until the moments and days are all passed, no more to return.

Solemn thought! Not a moment can be recalled, not a step can be retraced. All is locked in deathless silence! The past is forever gone! The present is ours! The future God holds in His hands! It is natural that thoughtful persons should have serious reflections at such a time as this. It is our object to try to give special directions to these reflections, to turn them into the channels that may prove the most profitable.

Let us pay a little attention to the context before noticing the teaching of the text. Benhadad, King of Syria, warred with Jehoram, King of Israel. Benhadad's plans were found out. He suspected an enemy in the camp. He summoned his officers, and demanded of them an explanation. He was told

that Elisha, the prophet in Israel, was the cause of the king's designs being frustrated. When he learned that Elisha was in Dothan he took immediate steps to conquer him. He sent a host in the night to take their places on the heights around Dothan. When Elisha's servant went out in the morning he gazed with dismay on the horses, chariots and hosts which surrounded the city. Much bewildered, he exclaimed, "Alas, my master! how shall we do?" The trustful prophet answered, "Fear not; they that be with us are more than they that be with them." And Elisha prayed, and said, "Lord, I pray Thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And the Lord opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha."

I. *Our Text Suggests that in This World There Is Hostility to God and His People.*

The Bible declares this, observation confirms it, experience demonstrates it. It is well to look the proposition squarely in the face as we enter the days of the New Year. There is nothing gained in denying the fact that there are forces arrayed against us if we be for God. There is the world, the flesh, and the devil.

1. *The World.*

Hear the words of Jesus. "Beware of men." "Behold I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves." "If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: because ye are not of the world, I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." John 15:19.

2. *The Flesh.*

"For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would" (Gal. 5:17). "That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Romans 8:5.

3. *The Devil.*

The Bible represents the devil with all his forces, subtlety and skill as being opposed to God and His people. We need not fool ourselves by thinking that the devil is either asleep or dead. We need to keep out of "the snare of the devil," to "stand against the wiles of the devil." Let us face our enemies, but not magnify the difficulties.

There is a brighter thought in the text.

II. *Our Allies.*

Our text teaches that there are more for us than there are against us. We ought to rejoice in this truth as we face the untried scenes of another year. Because of our allies we are assured of victory.

1. *The Godhead is For Us.*

There is a joyful thought in this verse written long ago: "Be strong and courageous, be not afraid nor dismayed for the king of Assyria, nor for all the multitude that is with him. With him is an arm of flesh; but with us

is the Lord our God to help us and to fight our battles" (II Chron. 32:7). We may look our foes in the face, and exclaim with the apostle Paul: "If God be for us, who can be against us?" Romans 8:31.

(1) *God the Father is For Us.*

It is a blessed truth that "one with God is a majority." There is a striking inscription on the front of Downing Hall, North Wales: "Without God, without all; with God, enough." We should be strengthened by reading these brave words by General Gordon: "Why should I fear? Is man stronger than God? I go up the Soudan alone, with an infinite Almighty God to direct and guide me, and am glad to so trust Him as to fear nothing; and indeed to feel sure of success."

"The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge." Psalm 46:7.

"If God be for us, His banner o'er us,
We'll sing the victor's song at last!"

(2) *Jesus Christ is on Our Side.*

He died for us. He arose for us. He lives for us. He loves us. He intercedes for us. During His earthly ministry He had compassion on all the needy. He possesses the same compassionate heart today. This is His glorious message to His people: "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the age." Matthew 28:20.

(3) *The Holy Spirit is Our Guide and Helper.*

The Holy Spirit is our teacher and inspirer. Thank God that we may count upon the presence and help of the Holy Spirit. "Howbeit, when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself, but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will show you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you." John 16:13-14.

2. *All God's People Are On Our Side.*

We are treading the path that the saints have trod. There are many noble souls in the thick of the fight today. They are with us. We are not alone as far as the fellowship of the saints is concerned. If we stand for truth and righteousness the very best people are with us.

3. *The Unfallen Angels Are On Our Side.*

The ministry of angels is one of the most fascinating thoughts presented in the Word of God. "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear Him, and delivereth them." Heb. 1:14, Psa. 34:7.

III. *"Fear Not."*

Why should we fear anything or anybody? We are on the winning side. Who will harm us if we be followers of that which is good? No weapon formed against us shall prosper. Many times over we are exhorted in the Word: "Fear not." "Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be

removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea." "In God have I put my trust; I will not fear what flesh can do unto me." "The Lord is on my side; I will not fear what man can do unto me." Look up Gen. 15:1; 26:24; Ex. 14:13; Num. 14:8, 9; Deut. 1:21; Isa. 41:10; 43:1. Ezek. 3:9; Hag. 2:5; Matt. 10:28.

"He hath delivered my soul in peace from the battle that was against me; for there were many with me." Praise God! Psalm 55:18.

AT THE PORTAL

Standing at the portal of the opening year,
Words of comfort meet us, hushing every fear,
Spoken through the silence by our Father's voice,
Tender, strong and faithful, making us rejoice.

"I, the Lord, am with thee; be thou not afraid,
I will help and strengthen; be thou not dismayed;
Yea, I will uphold thee with My own right hand;
Thou art called and chosen in My sight to stand."

For the year before us, oh, what rich supplies!
For the poor and needy, living streams shall rise;
For the sad and sinful, shall His grace abound;
For the faint and feeble, perfect strength be found.

He will never fail us; He will not forsake;
His eternal covenant He will never break.
Resting on His promise, what have we to fear?
God is all-sufficient for the coming year.

MID-WEEK SERMON

THEME: ***The Wondrous Birth.***

TEXT: Luke 2:10-12.

The Christmas Sign: a Babe! Fiery pillar in the wilderness; fleece of Gideon; fire of Elijah; cloven waters of Elisha; angel captain before Jericho. Here, but a Babe! World was growing old: wisdom, politics, religion. Needed restoration of the child-heart, simple faith. The Incarnation: "The Word 'tabernacled' among us."—John 1:14.

The Dwelling-Place of God: In the full New Testament sense. The most tremendous message ever delivered to men. "God became man and the human body of Jesus was his tabernacle."—Clow. David's desire to give God a better house fulfilled in David's greater Son. "He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father." The Gospel, according to many in that early day, was for the Jews. Paul carried it to all men everywhere. God can save anyone he will. "Jesus is God entering into a human life that he may enable men to understand Him." Think of it! "The high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity"—evidenced in a Babe!

The Place of Sacrifice: There was a shadow over the manger, the shadow of the Cross. Christmas carried us on to Easter. We miss the message of Christmas unless we see it in the light that streams from Calvary.

The Place of Meeting with God: The yearning of Job: "O that I knew

where I might find him!" Beecher argued that God must answer the yearning, or cease to be God. Christ of the Gospels is God's answer to the human soul's longing. "This is God! All I could desire in God I find in Christ. All I find in Christ I could desire in God. This is God!" God becomes flesh, real, near, in Jesus, the Babe of Bethlehem.

MID-WEEK SERMON

THEME: ***How Jesus Faced the Future.***

TEXT: Luke 9:51.

"What would Jesus do?" A real question for Christians. The New Year. What does it hold and how would Jesus face it?

Unflinchingly: "He steadfastly set his face!" At Jerusalem there waited for him trial, crucifixion, death. There was worse: betrayal, reviling, desertion. These are the things that break heart and spirit. Lord Randolph Churchill to his wife: "More than two-thirds, in all probability, of my life is over, and I will not spend the remainder of my years in beating my head against a stone wall. I expect I have made great mistakes; but there has been no consideration, no indulgence, no memory or gratitude—nothing but spite, malice, and abuse. I am quite tired and dead-sick of it all, and will not continue political life any longer." Apply all these terms to Jesus. He experienced them all. But they could not stop him.

Dutifully: "the days were being fulfilled" (margin). At the call of duty he went on to Gethsemane and Calvary. This is a word that is needed in our generation. There is too much sidestepping, too much refusal of responsibility. We need again the example of men in high places who are prepared to do their duty, to do the right though the heavens fall. It was thus Jesus went forward.

Hopefully: "for the joy that was set before him." This is in part the meaning of his sacrifice. He had great hope in God, and he had great hope in man. "Greater things than these shall ye do, because I go unto the Father."

Prayerfully: "Not my will, but thine be done!" We tune our radios to pick the message out of the air. We must tune hearts and minds to hear and know the message from God. And we shall hear his voice in the little things, in the commonplaces, in our sorrows and in our joys. It was thus Jesus heard it.

TOPICS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE'S SOCIETIES

CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR: Y. P.—The Gift of a New Year. Phil. 3:13-16.
Jr.—Remembering Christmas all the Year. Luke 2:25-40.

WALTHER LEAGUE: December Topic. Your Community. How can you assist in making it what a Christian and American Community should be. Service Project: Make survey of what is needed and present for thorough discussion, also for publication. Consult with leaders regarding discussion and means for putting into practice.

SPECIAL OCCASIONS

THEME: *This Ministry!*
(An Ordination Sermon Preached Before Seminary Students).

HARRY LATHROP REED, D. D.

TEXT: "Seeing I have this ministry . . . I never lose heart." II Cor. 4:1.

THIS MINISTRY! It is about *This Ministry* that I wish to speak, It was sufficient in the life of Jesus of Nazareth for a world no less distressed and desperate and discouraged than our world. It is still as sufficient, as satisfying, as compelling, as inspiring as it was then. It is your unparalleled good fortune that you have come into "this ministry" for such a time as this.

The twelve members of Jesus' first class succeeded him in "this ministry." When any of you are ordained to the ministry, you are given the "right hand of fellowship to take part of this ministry" with other ministers. It is the very phrase which the apostles used.

And one of the earliest and noblest of the long succession of ministers in this ministry was Paul of Tarsus. He writes about it a great deal. He gloried in it. He magnified it.

There is almost no limit to the varieties of this ministry; you may be ministers of education, ministers of healing, ministers of music, ministers of comfort, ministers of reconciliation, ministers of morals, ministers, of reminding, ministers of good news. "There are differences of ministries," as Paul says, "but the same Lord." If the Lord is the same, the varieties of your ministries may be manifold.

There are three different words in our New Testament vocabulary, all of them used by Paul, and all of them rendered into the English, especially in the King James version, by "ministers." I should like to outline and emphasize with those three words nearly all of what I have to say. Yours is a ministry of cooperation, inspiration, obligation.

The poverty of our English tongue is not altogether responsible for this monotony of translation, and it need not be laid at the door of our scholarly translators.

Our New Testament was put into the Latin, long before there *was* any English language. And later we took the word "minister" bodily out of the Latin, with exactly the same spelling. Every one of these three Greek words was rendered into Latin as "minister." Each of these words has a different content. I wish you would think of the functions of your ministry sometimes in terms of these words.

I. For the first word I can think of no exact English equivalent. I am going to render it *propeller*. In this ministry you are to be propellers. It is the ministry of cooperation.

The word meant originally a subordinate oarsman, a rower, one of the men in a galley who manned an oar and helped to make the vessel go. The ancient galleys on the Mediterranean were nearly all propelled by oars, with as much help from a sail or two as they could get. There were often fifty oarsmen to a ship. Sometimes many more, arranged in banks or rows, one bank above another. Each man had one oar, each was a propeller, but he

was an assistant propeller. Cooperation, balance, rhythm, marked their oarsmanship.

Any contrivance which helps to make a boat go is a propeller; as an oar, a paddle, a sail, a paddle-wheel, a screw. It is an interesting metaphor for a minister, especially applicable to a minister of state who is trying to propel the "ship of state."

Only, it must be remembered that nearly all propellers *can* make the craft go backwards as well as forwards, though that is not what they are contrived for, and that is not their natural, but their inverted or perverted use. It is an awkward method and produces slow motion—backing up by means of a "propeller."

When Paul and Barnabas started on their first evangelistic campaign, they had John Mark for their "minister." It is this word. It was a most successful effort, and until Mark got homesick and deserted them, he helped to make things go.

I suppose he bought tickets, made reservations, paid bills, and planned itineraries. That is, he was an assistant minister, with a good business head and a fine sense of cooperation, as well as of subordination. There is nothing more important for the progress of the Kingdom of God today than that its ministers should be willing and eager to be assistants, to cooperate with and subordinate themselves to other ministers.

When Jesus in the synagogue in Nazareth finished reading from the prophecies of Isaiah, he rolled up the scroll and handed it to the "minister," and sat down. It is the same word. "Sexton" would be nearer to our name for this minister. He helped to make the service of the Synagogue go smoothly and beautifully and without friction. The sexton is a most important assistant minister. Doubtless some of you will be sometimes your own sextons, building fires, ringing the bell, doing *any*thing. It is no unimportant service, and you will do it as unto the Lord. These, of course, are merely illustrations.

Once Jesus said: "If my kingdom were of this world, then would my "*ministers*" (my assistants, servants, officers) fight. It is this same word. They were to be the propellers of his kingdom—but not by fighting.

Luke, who knew a great deal about ships, calls himself a "minister of the word," using this same figure.

Paul was not unacquainted with ships. He had been shipwrecked three times, and had spent a night and a day "in the deep." He thinks of his ministry in terms of this figure. "Let a man so account of us as of ministers of Christ."

On the road to Damascus, according to Paul, the Jesus whom he persecuted said to him: "Arise and stand upon thy feet, for to this end have I appeared unto thee, to appoint thee a minister." That is, he was Christ's oarsman to speed the progress of the word and of the Kingdom. By cooperation and subordination, with all the power he had, he was to be a propeller.

Think often of *your* ministry in terms of this figure. You are one of a great crew of oarsmen. You do not push or pull alone. Remember the devastation in a crew when one oarsman gets out of stroke.

The progress of the Kingdom of God is dependent in large measures on

you as ministers, who are so filled with the spirit of God, the spirit of power, that he can use you as propellers.

For of course the paddle-wheel and the screw are powerless of themselves. There is a power which works through them. The sail needs the breeze, and the breeze is the symbol of spirit.

The oar and the paddle are the propellers but only in the hands of the oarsman. Subordination, cooperation, balance, rhythm, power—spiritual driving power—these are the characteristics of this kind of minister; Christ's oarsmen; the Kingdom's propellers.

II. The second word which is rendered "minister" with its kindred word "ministry" is quite different. From it in English we get the words liturgist, liturge, and liturgy. It has to do primarily with the minister's function as priest. "We have such a high priest . . . a *minister* of the sanctuary," is said of Jesus. And Paul writes to the Romans that grace was given to him of God that he might be a minister—a liturgist—of Jesus Christ to the nations, to act as a priest of God's good news, to see that they are consecrated by the holy spirit.

How interesting it is that the word service, which is a synonym for ministry, is the word that we also use for worship and for the various functions of the minister as priest! The church service, the Sunday School service, the children's service, the communion service, the burial service, the marriage service, the service of baptism, service of ordination, service of confirmation, service of installation, service of worship!

A large part of your ministry will be leadership in *this* kind of service, no matter what may be your special functions as ministers. You will lead men and women and children into the presence of God. And you cannot lead them into his presence unless you yourself practice the presence of God.

Because you are God's "liturgists," you will never be slovenly in conducting *any* service. You will never be irreverent, nor careless, nor unsympathetic, nor casual, nor boisterous, nor uninterested, nor unnatural, nor unprepared. You will try to be as simple and as unaffected and as natural as Jesus must have been. It is difficult to think of him as having pulpit mannerisms, a ministerial tone, a sepulchral or falsetto voice. The congregation, you remember, wondered at the graciousness, the gracefulness, of the words which fell from Jesus' lips.

You will never underestimate the all-importance of worship, nor forget that the beauty of holiness and the dignity of reverence are in the minister's keeping, and are often his gift to the worshiping people.

You who are ordained as God's "liturgists," God's ministers, will be a benediction at the funeral service, a spirit of joy at the marriage service, the glory of Christ at the Communion service, an inspiration at every church service.

If you are not ordained to administer the sacraments, you will think of yourselves as at least fore-ordained to make worship everywhere, in public and in private, beautiful, uplifting, encouraging, comforting, edifying, inspiring. God is a spirit, and you will worship him in spirit and in truth.

Because you are God's "liturgists" you will lead as it were liturgical lives—you will be paeans of praise. You will find God everywhere. Every

spot will be holy ground. Every land will be God's country. Everybody will be God's child. You will minister always of the things of God. Your happy presence will just naturally lift others into the presence of God. And you will not be dull, uninteresting, unattractive, defamed as superstitious or weak.

"This ministry" involves you all as liturgists, as leaders in the worship of God.

III. There is another word, the most common of the three, the whole New Testament is aglow with it—minister and ministry. It is the word that Jesus used when he said, "Whosoever will be great among you shall be your minister" . . . "even as the son of man came not to be ministered unto but to minister." It is the word Paul uses in the text—"This ministry."

Our English word "deacon" comes directly from the original Greek, but it is, of course, not nearly adequate to carry all its meaning.

Scholars used to think the derivation of the word made it mean literally "one who makes the dust fly." More probably it means one who pursues; and ministry is a "pursuit." It is the pursuit of helpfulness.

We speak of "literary pursuits;" of that which a man systematically engages in, as a "pursuit;" a recreation, a trade, a profession, an occupation, a hobby; they are pursuits.

I hope you will think of your ministry primarily, and secondarily too, as your pursuit. Jesus came not to be ministered unto but to minister. Ministry was his pursuit, his occupation, his mission; it was his Father's business.

"I press on," Paul wrote. "I press on. This one thing I do, I *pursue,* I press on." Ministry becomes your pursuit. And if it was Jesus' pursuit, then you have only to study his ministry to have the directions for your own. "Not to be ministered unto but to minister, and to give his life." That is its definition as a pursuit, it is the pursuit of giving, of giving one's life, as freely, as lavishly, as selflessly as Jesus gave his.

Of course, ministry, service, ought to be a part of every Christian life—"ministers all." The pastor's function is to make ministers of his people, "to perfect the saints in the work of ministering." But "this ministry" is notable and desirable in that it makes "service" your profession and your pursuit.

It includes everything. It is your obligation as a follower of Jesus Christ. There is nothing that is involved in your love of God and love of your neighbor that is not included in this service.

It involves social service, and community service, race service, and international service. It includes friendship and friendliness, sympathy and love. It comprises teaching and preaching, in public and in private. It enlists you in the pursuit of giving all that you have in gifts and attainments, and all that you are as Christian men and women. It means lavish, unstinted, unwearied, incessant, unselfish, Christ-like giving of yourselves; as freely as God has given to you.

But even the ideal of service is liable to abuse and misuse. In his caustic and keenly critical book, "America Comes of Age," Andre Siegfried puts his finger on some very sensitive spots in our life in the United States. In the chapter on American Industry, he says that "service" is "the indispensable

password of those who wish to justify their profits;" and that, "in the end, 'service' is the doctrine of an optimistic Pharisee trying to reconcile success with justice."

The "service" of "this ministry" is distinctly different from that—or else it is not Christian, or else it is not the ministry of Jesus.

Paul found it a glorious ministry—excelling in glory. He is not the only one who has found it that. You will find it a splendid pursuit, a ministry full of splendor. For him it was a preaching ministry, a teaching ministry, a pastoral ministry, a personal ministry.

Paul's ideals for "this ministry" are worthy of your adoption: *honesty*, absolute frankness and fearlessness; as a preacher, as a teacher, as a friend. *Sincerity*, no tricks or makeshifts or disguises or subterfuges in his handling of the truth, the message of God to him and to mankind; *tirelessness*, hard work, incessant activity, using all his God given power to convince and to instruct; *tactfulness*, commending himself to every man's conscience by his life and by the *way* he told the truth, giving no occasion of offense in anything, that his ministry might not be blamed; *hopefulness*, confident that while he was utterly insufficient of himself, there was a sufficiency of God which was available for him; *joyfulness*, never discouraged, never losing heart, never discontented, seeking to commend his ministry by his patience, his kindness, his love, his intellectual attainment, his purity of purpose, his unfailing good humor. They are his own words and they are worthy of all acceptation.

May I suggest that you fortify and equip and inspire yourselves by reading quite often some of his happy characterizations of his ministry—this ministry? Or read the second epistle of Timothy which has for its subject, "The responsibility of an ordained minister."

For it is the same ministry all down the ages from Jesus Christ to *you*, the latest of his ministers. It is the ministry of a life that is given to the uttermost. May God bless you with his richest blessings in your pursuit of this ministry, and keep you always and forever thankful to Jesus Christ who gave you the purpose for it, endows you with the power for it, counted you faithful for it, and put you into the ministry.

THEME: *Do All To the Glory of God. (Practicing the Presence of God).*

ARTHUR P. VAUGHN, D. D.

SCRIPTURE: I Corinthians 10:25-26; 30-31; Matt. 10:42; 25:31-40.
TEXT: Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God. I Cor. 10:31.

More than three hundred years ago George Herbert sang,

> "A servant with this clause
> Makes drudgery divine;
> Who sweeps a room as for Thy laws
> Makes that and th' action fine."

At a date even earlier Brother Lawrence in his medieval monastery kitchen "practiced the presence of God" while he prepared vegtables for the soup

that would feed the brotherhood. Busy with these humblest tasks he found his most exalted hours, and men came far to see the glory shining in that scullery.

Wordsworth found the same miracle in the English hills,

> "I thought of Chatterton, the marvelous boy,
> Of him who walked in glory and in joy
> Following his plow along the mountain side."

And Gerard Hopkins used crude words to jar us into awareness of the wonder.

> "The world," he says, "is charged with the grandeur of God. . . . To lift up the hands in prayer gives glory to God; but a man with a dungfork in his hand, a woman with a slop-pail give Him glory too. He is so great that all things give Him glory if you mean they should. *So,* then my brethren, *live.*"

Where did this idea come from? This concept that the Most Holy and Eternal One has any benefit of pleasure from the commonplace toil of His creatures, however faithfully performed; and that it is our high duty to do the least such service with devotion as unto Him? It is wholly alien to the thought of all the ancient peoples, and exactly opposed to feeling and practice in much of the world today. Whoever toiled with his hands at the drudgeries of life was despised as a menial. Such tasks were beneath the dignity of any one of good birth or wealth, of learning or important position. Every people had its distinctive caste marks. In China long fingernails and long sleeves for the men and bound feet for the women made all work impossible, and were visible certain proof that they did no work with their hands for others or for themselves. They were above being servants. Only where Christ's law has gained acceptance and has given new quality to men's thought and conduct do we find any who choose to minister instead of being ministered unto. Rarer still is a life wholly devoted to the purpose of honoring God by such service.

Every day of His life Jesus was dealing with God, consciously and persistently. "The food I live by," He said, "is to do the will of my Father and finish His work." He did this as he shaped implements in the carpenter shop, as He supplied wine at the marriage supper, as He touched and healed the fevered child, the blind, the palsied, as He blessed and divided bread and fish to hungry thousands, as He washed the disciples' feet when they were too superior to stoop to the task, as He explained the laws of Moses to the multitudes in terms of their everyday relations and obligations. And these dull weary people caught glimpses of God's way of doing things in Jesus' actions and manner. They slowly became aware of the grace and holiness, the love and mercy and justice of God. And whatever they newly perceived was to His glory.

When a hurrying messenger from Bethany brought Jesus word that Lazarus was ill, He said to the disciples, "This illness is not to end in death; its end and purpose is to unveil to men the glory of God." To grieving Martha He said, "Your brother will rise again. . . . No one who lives and believes in me will ever die. Do you believe that?" A little later in the garden when

He bade them open the tomb where Lazarus lay, Martha wavered. "Lord, he has been dead four days." But Jesus, unwavering, pointed to the purposed end, the desired glory: "Did I not tell you, if you will only believe you shall see the glory of God." And through Him in that hour the works of God, revealing the qualities and character of God, the love and power of God, were seen and known of men. John 11:1-4, 40-44.

Soon thereafter in the Upper Room, resigning His commission as Saviour of a world of perishing men, Jesus made this report:

> "Father, I have glorified Thee on earth by accomplishing the work Thou gavest me to do. . . . I have made Thy Name known to the men whom Thou hast given to me from the world. . . . This is eternal life, that they know Thee, the only real God. . . . I have given them the glory Thou gavest me, that they may be one as we are one—I in them and Thou in me . . . so that the world may recognize that Thou hast sent me and hast loved them as Thou hast loved me."

In Jesus' acts and words every day God had been working, revealing His nature and character which are His glory. God was so clearly in that work and life that dull-souled men could see and know Him, and His glory. Such living is eternal life, because the Eternal is "perfectly one" with the human hand that works and mouth that speaks. So Christ gave the knowledge of God and oneness with God to mortal, commonplace men whom God had given Him. "I have given them the glory thou gavest me, that they may be one as we are one—I in them and Thou in me."

So those disciples who found and knew God through the living of Jesus, and the increasing throng for whom Jesus also prayed, "all who believe by their word," alike accepted and practiced and passed on to others this new manner of living, at one with God, devoted wholly to the glory of God.

In a world where evil is incessantly aggressive from without and insidious in the heart, such living can never be easy. Jesus Himself forewarned His first followers, "They have persecuted me; they will also persecute you." But He added, "Rejoice and exult in that, for your reward is great in heaven." Soon the opposition became deadly, and the first Christian martyr laid down his life, as his Lord had done, true to that life and the glory of it. Stephen, stoned to death outside Jerusalem's gate, "looked steadfastly into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God."

Guarding the clothes of the executioners that day, a young man named Saul caught a glimpse of the glory of God in that life; a glory so convincing that he consecrated his own life to laying hold of it, "knowing that bonds and affliction awaited him," and to preaching it world-wide, and converting others to it. Forgetting all things past he pressed on to the prize of that high calling of God. So we are not surprised to hear him urging on his converts later the same method and code of living, the same goal. "Whether ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." Every act must measure on that yardstick. None is so lowly as to escape that need. None is insignificant. It wipes out at once our partitions between sacred and non-sacred. It does not permit our subterfuge of fencing off a small section of life for religion, while retaining jurisdiction over the major part of our affairs. It is uncompromising. Lived in accord with this law, life is

eternal, doing the will of God in earth, then in heaven. *Do all* to the glory of God.

Attuned to customary modes of behavior and moods of thought, it is a sharp shock to come unprepared upon these words that speak in the same breath of eating, drinking, the washing of feet, the suffering of injustice—and the glory of God. "*Yet that was the way Jesus lived and talked all the time.*" And He gave it to fishermen, shopkeepers and housewives as their rule and discipline, not to any saintly order of spiritually elite and elect. He gave it as a daily program for humble lives. If God is to have His glory in human life it must be by lifting all of life, including the most commonplace duties and services, up into His high purpose and plan for faultless, complete, redeemed souls, with Him forevermore. Yes, even the slaves were called to this same glory: "Whatsoever ye do, work heartily as unto the Lord, and not unto men; knowing that from the Lord ye shall receive the inheritance (heirs of the Lord of life): ye serve the Lord Christ." Col. 3:22-24. Such living "turned the world upside down" in very truth, as the mob in Thessalonica attested. It took self down from the high goal of life and enthroned God there in glory. Across the provinces of dissolute, decaying Rome, men saw that glory in the service of their slaves in their kitchens, men saw that glory shining over the martyrs in the arenas. And still today that life and glory overturns the world's customs and codes. Among the forty million refugees streaming from China's bombed and burned towns, innumerable wounded and starving have watched the Christians, in like extremity with themselves, spending themselves, sacrificing and sharing with others' need. Why did they do it? For what motive? No outer force compelled it. Why did they not keep their food, save their strength for their own safety? And why did they not quail before the blasting horror, the brutal butchery of the invaders? In the Christian martyrs of China men around are seeing a new order of life; are seeing as never before the glory of God—and reaching out hungrily for it.

How can you find that glory? Where will I find it? And how may we uncover it to other souls now blind to it, so that God will be known to them; so that God may dwell in them as their eternal life?

Paul answers our questions; wise answers from his rich experience. You are, he says, so constantly watching the god of this world, and following so closely, that it blinds your eyes. Turn your eyes to Christ lifted up, lifted so high that all the perishing can see Him. Lifted up He draws all men. Looking, you will see "the glory of Christ who is the likeness of God." II Cor. 3:18; 4:6. Then look at those who truly follow in Christ's train. From them also the same glory glows, from inner graces and outward services. That glory comes from only one source; from the Spirit of God dwelling in you, working through you. Paul continues, In this way "God has shone within my heart to illuminate men with the knowledge of God's glory in the face of Christ." And "all of us, reflecting the glory of the Lord in our unveiled faces, are changed into likeness to Him, from one degree of glory to another, for this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit."

Therefore whether ye eat or drink, whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God. That is the guiding word for every business man and every clerk;

for the industrialist and his technician and his millhand; for the farmer and his helpers who feed mankind. All the handling of human supplies and material properties must be bent to a just economic order. Do all to the glory of God.

It is the touchstone for the whole educational process, from mothers at the cradle, the trainers of the race by God's appointment; from primary teachers on to university professions and the research explorers beyond. To develop all latent God-given talents, and all the yet undiscovered resources of God's earth, and use them fully for the welfare of all His children, do all to the glory of God!

It is the rule for every physician, all health experts, all physical trainers; to win the battle against every malady, stamp out every preventable disease, and lift the burden of pain and bodily inefficiency and consequent economic loss and privation that cuts so deeply into the common well being.

It is the yardstick of all social control and organization and statescraft, to find in this crowded world the way by which each person, each group, each nation may retain all the rights and liberties that its neighbor may share with equal benefit to all. To the glory of God do unto others as you would have them do to you.

It is the ultimate reward in all striving and attainment in all the arts; the finest flavor and delight in all our use of leisure, in our recreations and our pleasures—all to the glory of God.

It is the only sanction of religion, denying all selfexaltation and advantage, repudiating obligation to any other god, maintaining the oneness and accord of all members of the spiritual order. It is the one means of resolving the differences in opinion and policy within the Christian body, of winning oneness in the Father and Christ that was His passionate prayer. "The God of patience and comfort grant you the same mind one with another, in accord with Jesus Christ, that with one accord ye may glorify God."

Though in our sin-cursed warring world today it may seem that the glory is despised, denied, a forgotten glory, it remains the one catalyst that can bring about "the working-together of all things for good." It is still "the chief end of man." When we live to that end earth will be truly "a colony of heaven" doing the will of God here as it is done in heaven. Doing *all* to the glory of God.

THEME: *The Deacon's Duty To the Church.*
(An address at the ordination of Deacons).

CHARLES HADDON NABERS

You have today been ordained and installed a deacon in a Presbyterian church.

By the votes of the membership of this organization you have been called to the office of deacon. By the laying on of hands, by the presbyters you have been ordained. It is no insignificant office which you occupy today.

It is an office which came into being out of need in the first generation of the Christian church. The story of the institution of the office of deacons told in the sixth chapter of Acts, a portion of Scripture which should become very familiar to each of you.

It is an office graced by the first martyr of the Christian church. Each deacon will remember with pride and humility that it was a deacon whose blood was first shed, in that long line of martyrs which has marked the progress of the church in every age and on every continent.

Special Qualifications for the Office

It is an office, the qualifications of which are primarily spiritual. That was insisted upon by the Apostles; that was emphasized by Paul as he gives directions concerning the holding of church office to Timothy, and it is the understanding and the attempted practice of the church today. There are four elements in the spiritual equipment which every deacon should possess.

"Of honest report." A deacon must be a man whose reputation in the community where he lives is beyond question—good. It is essential to your filling, satisfactorily to God and to the church, this office that people both in the church and out of the church should think well of you. It is evident that they do, else you would not have been elected. It is for you to maintain this reputation by careful conduct, by discreet conversation, by a worthy walk.

"Full of the Holy Ghost." The religious life of a deacon should be above that of the average church member, much above this average! Your consecration to God and to the cause of the Lord, which for you in main measure is the church which has exalted you to the office of deacon, should be marked before the world. The cause of Christ lags perceptibly when leadership slips into the hands of men not consecrated to God. Forgetting the things which are behind and reaching forth unto the things which are before, you must press forward, and grow daily in grace and in experimental knowledge of our Lord and Saviour.

"Wisdom." A deacon needs an uncommon amount of common sense. The office provides no place for cranks, lopsided, unbalanced men. The deacon should look steadily upward to God, but keep both feet firmly on solid ground. It is not unusual for men of mature wisdom and practical experience in their own affairs to leave their common sense behind when they face questions involving sound judgment in the church. Do not be among that number. When God, through the voice of this congregation, calls you to the office of deacon, He expects and his people expect your best wisdom to be at the service of the Kingdom.

"Faith." According to your faith be it unto you! The officer in the church of Christ must be a man of great faith. Only a stupendous hold on God through faith in the Master fits you for your task. Only a man of great faith can climb the mountains of "It-Can't-Be-Done!"

Financial Responsibility of the Deacon

The office of deacon is associated with money in the mind of church people. It is well that this is the case, for from the beginning the deacon has had charge of finances in the church. But, because the deacon deals with money, this does not make his office secular. It rather emphasizes the truth set forth

frequently in the Bible that money and financial matters are spiritual concerns. The parables which Jesus uttered were nearly all parables which dealt with money and property. Paul never wrote to a church without dealing with matters financial. How he did link up money with matters which we consider holiest of all! After the grand prose-poem in I Corinthians 15, about the resurrection, he continues: "Now concerning the collections." The financial support of the local church, and the regular offering in every worship service is not something dragged in, but an adherent, necessary, and Christ-appointed part of, the program of Christian worship. It is with that the deacon deals.

Therefore consideration of this particular phase of your work is not out of place.

To the gifts of a people in any congregation there are certainly three measures. By these three things you will know how they will give to the work of the church.

The first one of these measures is the least important, although thought by those without experience to be almost the only measure for giving. It is this: "How much money does the person possess?" Of course where there is no money there can be no gift, and where there is great abundance there can be abundant giving. The church treasurer's books of any congregation can never be depended upon to indicate the financial rating of its members. Other things enter in far larger.

The second measure to know how much a person will give to the work of God is found in answer to this question: "How near does the person live to Christ?" The gift to the church indicates the reality of an interest in the kingdom of God. It is the measure of one's love to Christ and to the church. Every church treasurer's book is a startling revelation of both generosity and stinginess. The church is supported not by the wealthy folks, but by religious folks.

The third measure is one which concerns the deacon. It is obtained by an answer to this question: "How much faith in and love for the church has the officer who goes to secure pledges? Every year before Every Member canvass time the names of the members of the church are written on cards. These cards are given to men of the church, usually in pairs. Now it does not matter very much how splendid a lot of cards some men take, they won't return with anything much in the way of subscriptions. They won't find the people. They won't seriously try. They will keep the cards in their pockets for a week or two until soiled and bent and return them with an alibi written on the back which can be shot through with holes by anybody who knows the person. Now on the other hand, and thank the Lord for it, it does not matter very much how poor a group of cards some other men are furnished. They do their work, promptly, sincerely, seriously, hopefully, inspiringly, and they will return with surprisingly large contributions for the church budget from unanticipated sources; and in doing so, they build sentiment and create zeal for the work of God, for these noble qualities, like ignoble ones are contagious. When schools and colleges hold closing exercises you read of medals given for various and sundry excellencies. But no medal is ever offered for the most excellent quality a student can have—

dependability. It ought to be recognized and awarded! So with the church officer: there is no finer or higher quality for the every member canvassor, in the ordinary Sabbath afternoon service, or on Wednesday night, than dependability.

The Challenge of the Office

You are a leader; the sheep follow your example. The deacon is in every case a key man. He is either a promoter of pessimism or an apostle of optimism. A drove of deer with a lion for a leader will accomplish more than a drove of lion with a deer for a leader.

Therefore, deacons, it's up to you—to fight harder and longer than anybody else has the heart to fight.

It's up to you, to believe farther and to trust longer than any other folks are willing to believe and trust.

It's up to you, to love more people who are certainly not lovable, and to keep on loving them despite all the mean despicable things they say and the ugly things they do.

The obstacles which face this church are great. Because of this fact, the conquest of them requires great courage, great faith, great consecration, in short, great souls. You would not have it otherwise!

I know these obstacles can be overcome. I know it from the facts, figured calmly in broad daylight, and worked like any other problem in mathematics. It has been demonstrated before me; I have demonstrated it myself, and I have seen the Q. E. D. at the end.

I know the obstacles can be overcome. I know it from the human elements involved in the equation. To think otherwise is to close one's eyes to the faces of the men and women who gather here every Sabbath for worship.

I know it from the heritage which belongs to this congregation. To say that these obstacles cannot be surmounted is to be untrue to the memories of men and women whose contributions to the cause of Christ can never be over-stated, and whose vision must not be ignored.

I know the obstacles facing us as a congregation can and will be overcome. I know it from conviction born in my own heart by the Holy Spirit, a conviction which remains unshaken despite the pessimism and indifference of shirkers and quitters on the fringes of God's army of witnesses.

Join me in that faith this morning! Join me in a march forward for Christ, in a triumphant march onward with Christ.

THEME: *My Father's World. (Good Friday).*

FRED B. WYAND, D. D.

TEXT: "He hath founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the floods." Psalm 24:2.

"The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein: For He hath founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the floods." The world belongs to God. It is His by the indisputable right of creation.

It Was God Who Created the Earth

In that far away undated period when there was nothing but the triune God, not a particle of matter, not a gill of water, not a ray of light, nor a breath of air, when there was nothing ponderable or imponderable, visible

or invisible, tangible or intangible, the Creator spoke the abysmal depths of chaos into being; laid out the broad, fertile prairies amid the surging foams of unchannelled seas and tossed billows of roaring floods into exalted mountain summits to stand unshaken through the centuries of men. God was both the Architect and Builder. He gave to cosmos its form and to earth its matter. While later men were to dig to lay their houses upon solid foundations, God laid the foundations of His world upon the seas and established its security upon floods. In the making, the earth was beautiful to contemplate and when it was finished it was magnificent to behold. Viewing the wide panorama of His handiwork, God pronounced it good.

In the possession of a few hundred acres of land, we think we are rich, but God owns the earth, and that not as man with a claim upon his possession just for a season, but God will own it as long as the world shall stand. It belongs to Him.

"This is my Father's world,
And to my listening ears,
All nature sings,
And round me rings
The music of the spheres.
This is my Father's world.
I rest me in the thought
Of rocks and trees, of skies and seas
His hand the wonders wrought.

"This is my Father's world,
The birds their carols raise,
The morning light, the lily white,
Declare their Maker's praise.
This is my Father's world,
He shines in all that's fair;
In the rustling grass I hear Him pass,
He speaks to me everywhere."

This is the poet's picture of the world; and it is a beautiful one. It is as the world was after it had come fresh from the creative hand of God and as it should be today. But there is another side to this picture.

Man Has Marred and Scarred the Earth

I do not mean that man has marred and scarred the earth by the tunnelling of mountains, the harnessing of waters to drive the wheels of machinery, erecting high smoke-stacks of industry to belch forth their blackness throughout the once pure air of God and his ceaseless efforts in destroying the virgin forests. I am thinking in terms of man's inhumanity to man and his injustices to his fellow-man.

"What though the spicy breezes
Blow soft o'er Ceylon's isle;
Though every prospect pleases,
And only man is vile?" Then,
"In vain with lavish kindness
The gifts of God are strown."

Men,—vile men, sinful men, are ever destroying the gifts of God. The gifts of property, liberty, freedom, justice, righteousness and life itself. The headlines of our dailies are set in large, black, mournful type in frank confirmation of this assertion.

From across the seas we read of "BOMBARDMENTS FROM THE

AIR"; "HOSTAGES ARE EXECUTED" and "DEATH REIGNS." We read of "BLOOD PURGES" one after another. Our blood chills as we read of "REFUGEES FLEEING, AND MACHINED-GUNNED IN FLIGHT" by beasts in the air. Ships are destroyed, seas are unsafe and fields are running red with blood of innocent young men who are driven forth to die in battle. Such are the mounting tragedies until life and limb are not safe on land, sea or in the air. Across the earth mighty butchers of mankind are at work incarnadining God's created world with the blood of human beings until, in some places at least, human life has become about the cheapest thing on earth.

"Yes, Flanders still produce them,
The blood-red poppies of the war.
In field, on hillside, they are seen,
The flame-red showing where they are.

"Oh, tell me, sin-mad world of men,
These wars of hatred, can they stop?
Don't drive these boys to battlefields,
And mow them down—another crop!"

Behold America! All is not safe here. Strife and confusion are about us. In this land of fertile farms and bursting granaries we are so confused that untold multitudes go to bed hungry, and weary children must lie down to sleep on rags and mats of straw. The Sabbath has become a day for pleasure to multitudes instead of a day of worship. But 11.4 per cent of our population attend church and only 36 per cent of the church membership attends our morning services.

Is it, therefore, any wonder that crime continues to mount and drunken drivers scatter their victims along our highways? Today we are in the midst of a great military program building our largest navy and army in peacetime history as a matter of national defense, (*the results of which can be better understood at the time of the reading this sermon than now months in advance when it is being written*). The same weapons which dictators use to destroy nations and democracy, we are building to safe-guard our own liberties. Man has prostituted the gifts of God for man's destruction which should be for his abundant life. World conditions must change. This is God's world and some day He will lay claim to His own.

God is Going to Reconcile the World to Himself

He has attempted to reconcile it through love. He has gone all the way since the first Adam, through the second, to redeem the world and reconcile it through love. From the days of the sins of our first parents, sin and sorrow have made their unmerciful tracks across the centuries leaving the broken wrecks of bodies and souls in the paths of destruction, and God in ceaseless efforts has ever extended loving invitations for the wondering, prodigal world to return, not for judgment, but to be re-instated in fellowship and harmony with the will of God.

He called to Adam in the cool of the day, saying, "Adam where art thou," thinking to cause him to see the errors of his way and return to communion with his Creator.

He gave to the world an object lesson in His dealings with Noah in the construction of the ark and confirmed their conversation not only with

the flood, but by the apocalypse of nature in stretching the rainbow across the sky for Noah and every generation that followed to see.

He called up Abram from the Ur of the Chaldees with whom He made a covenant and brought him to the land of promise where he was to begin anew the plan of the world reconciliation to God.

He set the desert bush on fire to attract the attention of the herdsmen of Midian to whom He gave the commandments, warm from the flashing pencil in the fiery fingers of lightning, that men everywhere might know the law of God and be guided thereby. He, further, declared His leadership to Moses and the children of Israel as He rolled His matchless glory above them in the pillar of cloud by day and the fire by night.

He drove across the sky the heavy artillery of Heaven whose thundering wheels sounded forth the glory of the sovereignty of God, until His prophets preached across ancient Israel, everywhere, calling upon men to become reconciled to Him. Instead they offered Him doves, lambs and oxen as sacrifices, burnt offerings and sin offerings of every description, while they continued in their sins, and these for sin could not atone.

Then "Alas! and did my Saviour bleed; And did my Sovereign die?" Indeed, He died to reconcile man to God " 'Tis done! the Great Transaction's done." Jesus offered Himself for man. He was more than the sacrifice; He was the Sacrificer. He was more than the offering; He was the High Priest of Calvary. No man had the power to take His life from Him. Alone He had the power to lay down His life and to take it up again. Had Jesus died as a victim in the hands of plotting Jews He could not have been the world's Redeemer. No blood shed other than by oblation of itself can save men from sin. The Gethsemane victory did not bring Jesus to the place where He was willing to commit Himself into the cruel hands of Caiaphas and Pilate, so much as it did to bring Him to the place where He became willing to make Himself the High Priest of Golgotha. The struggle was not over the nature and person of the sacrifice. That had already been determined by the Divine economy of the Godhead. The struggle was over the nature and person of the one who was to make the offering. There is where the battle is always fought. It is one thing to be coerced into giving; it is quite another thing to be willing to give.

In this Jesus conquered. Conquered in spite of the rebelling forces of nature. His human nature cried out for self-preservation. The world about Him compounded Him gall. The waters would not quench His thirst and the midday sun refused to shine. Conquered in spite of the revolting forces of men. His own forsook Him, denied Him and betrayed Him. His enemies arrayed themselves against Him. They villified Him, spat upon Him, crowned Him with thorns and flagellated Him with the Roman scourge. Conquered in spite of the fact that God, God the Father, in His deep arcana turned His face from Him. What a conqueror! He broke the laws of nature in twain and in His divinity picked up His humanity and laid it on the altar, undid the schemings of Caiaphas, transformed the grave into the gateway of eternity and changed what would have been, otherwise, the most ignominious crime of the centuries into the most glorious transaction which was ever consummated on earth to reconcile a lost world to God. Thence He plucked from death its sting, robbed the grave of its victory and arched

above the chamber of dust the rainbow of hope in man's fondest ambitions of future re-unions with loved ones in becoming "the first fruits of them that slept." This all being done, it is God's greatest eternal attempt in the reconciliation of the generations of men.

God is Not Going to Fail

However desirous Satan may be for the possession of the earth and the destruction of civilizations God will never relinquish the rights of His own creation and turn the title papers over into the hands of another.

The German General Blucher, who helped the English defeat Napoleon at Waterloo, once visited London on the invitation of Lord Wellington. As he stood atop the dome of St. Paul's looking down over the city Lord Wellington asked him, "Well, what do you think of it?" As the blood of ten generations of warriors stirred his veins the old General replied, "What a city for pillage!"

"Pillage!" That's the uppermost thought in the minds of dictators today. For "pillage" Germany marched into Austria, Czecho-Slovakia, Poland, Luxemburg, Denmark, Norway, Netherlands, Belgium, France and so on leaving in the wake of her invading armies destruction, devastation and death. For "pillage" the Russian Bear struck from her mystic den to gobble down her share of bleeding Poland and then turned to swallow Latvia, Estonia, Lithuania and as much of Finland and Rumania as she could get. Yes for "pillage" the War Lords and Dictators are crushing out the lives of men and nations, but God is not dead nor asleep and will in due time declare His title to His creation.

The immediate outcome of the present conflict between totalitarianism and democracy we can not predict with certitude, yet we know that in the final run righteousness will prevail for God is not destined to fail. All power in heaven and on earth belong not to man, but to God. "Lift up your eyes on high," said the Psalmist, "and behold who hath created these things, that bring out their host by numbers: he calleth them all by names, by the greatness of his might, for that He is strong in power; not one faileth." If God in His Almighty power can command the heavens to obey Him, He can speak to the troubled masses of confused humanity and cause the earth to respond to His will. At His command God could speak and make His enemies His footstools. In the twinkling of an eye He could refine the world with Fire.

Once He answered the prayers of Hezekiah and allowed the hosts of Sennacherib—numbering a quarter of a million soldiers—to fall into that endless sleep outside the gates of Jerusalem the night before the expected morning of invasion. While the armies of Judah did nothing more than look on, Sennacherib went to his death. God has not yet lost His power to deal with the armies of men.

Again, God unleased the fury of His wrath and the wicked cities, Sodom and Gomorrah, lay in dust and ashes as the result of their wickedness. Not a single inhabitant, save a part of the family of Lot, was spared. In that same section of the land today archeologists unearth the remains of antiquities which testify that once a great consuming fire raged through that part of the earth, literally and completely destroying every living thing.

In other days He spake and turned to wash the world from its sins with a flood, sparing none but the family of Noah. As it was in the days of Noah, "They were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage" with wickedness and sin increasing on every side until there were no righteous people, other than Noah and his family, in all the earth, so God can allow our world to go from bad to worse until He Himself will be forced to come again to assume personal charge of His creation. God will not fail. He cleansed the world before with water (water is used to wash out dirt and filth) and can, like the fire of the furnace which consumes the dross and leaves the gold refined, God can purify the earth with fire. Yes, God can do this. If on the morning of creation He could build a world on tossing seas and establish it upon raging goods, starting it in its endless circumgyrations about the sun and among the stars, comets and planets of the entire system of a created universe without the loss of a single second of time across the millenniums, He can, at will, purify the earth. He can command the angelic legions to visit the armies of Magog (Gog) and utterly annihilate them and take full possession of the earth and rule over men in the person of His Son. There are many who believe that day is near. They point to the terrible happenings in the past twenty-five years. There was the world's war with its 10,000,000 graves; the influenza epidemic with its 12,000,000 deaths; famines in China and across the fertile fields of Russia where vast multitudes starved to death; frequent earthquakes in divers places, the increasing persecution of the Jews, another World's War in the offing, all of which these prophets say, indicate that the end is imminent. It may be so. It can be so. After man proposes, God disposes.

However, it would not please God to destroy the earth. He would not enjoy witnessing the conflagration of the earth any more than man could enjoy seeing the labors of his hands going up in smoke. God could not behold with delight suffering, perishing humanity any more than could a father stand by the bedside of his dying prodigal son and take pleasure in the sight of his agonies. Not God, a Father of Love. If He notices the sparrows that fall by the wayside, He is ever troubled with the sufferings of human beings. The heart of God is now broken—as much as ever the heart of Christ was broken on Calvary—as He looks out today upon a world mad in war. Patiently is He waiting, gently is He pleading for the world of men to accept the Christ—His final and supreme effort for redemption—who can speak peace to a troubled heart, as He did to the troubled Sea of Galilee. In love God wants to change the weapons of war into instruments of peace and cause the desert of sin to bloom as the rose of righteousness. But unless men listen to His voice, "He will not keep His anger forever. He will not always chide." There is nothing more terrific than rejected and wounded love. As a man can sin away his day of grace, so can a nation and, likewise, a world. Christ can come to take upon His own shoulders the government of the world. Man will never rule the earth. This authority is reserved for none but the Son of God.

"This is my Father's world,
O let me never forget,
That though the wrong seems oft so strong,
God is the Ruler yet.

This is my Father's world,
The battle is not done,
Jesus who died shall be satisfied,
And earth and heaven be one."

FOR THE BULLETIN BOARD

When money talks little else is heard.
Disrespect for any law breeds contempt for all.
Surrender is always the first step toward certain victory in the Christian life.
Sin without sorrow is the world's worst ailment.
It is as wise to be good as it is good to be wise.
Going to church means only one hour out of the 168.
Your religion can't mean much to you unless it means much to others.
To try and fail is better than not to try and succeed.
If you are criticized you have probably done something worth while.
Man doesn't break laws, they break him.
You are helping to carry or you're part of the load.
Truth never argues with itself.
Examination shows there is no neutrality. You are for or against.

PRAY

Pray when the morning sunshine
Illumines your upturned face;
Pray when the shades of evening
Hold you in their fond embrace.

Pray when your joy aboundeth,
And happiness marks your way;
For it is not in the long night watches
That Christ is lost, but the day.

Pray when the shadows deepen,
When low hangs the pall of night,
And into your home death enters
To smother the flickering light.

Then pray in the morn and the evening,
Show God and the world you care,
And He who heareth in secret,
Will quietly answer your prayer.
—*George W. Wiseman*

ALL LIFE IS FAITH

All life is faith! Men may feel the throe
Of senseless fear and fancied woe,
But nature, unperturbed and free,
Maintains a deep serenity:—
A simple trust has made it so.

Spring waits the sun; unfearing, go
The migrant birds; with heart aglow
Each dawn appears:—can man not see,
All life is faith!

O trustful Earth! O Sky, bestow
The truth thy humblest creatures know,
Creation chants no threnody,
But only hope and constancy,
While Love Eternal whispers low,
All life is faith!
—*Alfred Grant Walton*

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